

2010

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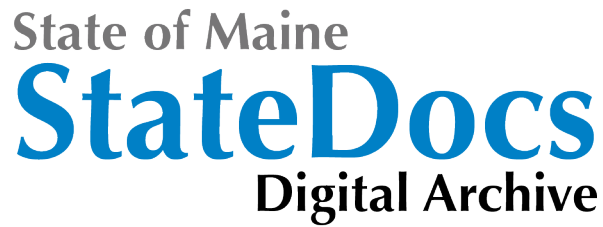
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2010 Archive of **Governor Baldacci's Press Releases**

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Table of Contents

Governor Baldacci Names Elizabeth Townsend Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation	10
Governor Names MaineHousing, Dirigo Health and Maine Retirement System Nominees	11
Governor to Deliver State of the State Address on January 21	13
Maine Companies Awarded Energy Efficiency Grants.....	14
Governor Supports Youth Program in National Competition.....	16
Governor Statement on Major Federal Award to University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center.....	17
Governor Announces Homeowner Weatherization Incentives.....	18
Governor Names Ethics and Gambling Control Board Nominees	20
Governor and Maine Legislature Express Support for Haiti	21
Governor Renews Order Allowing Larger Trucks on Interstate.....	23
Governor Declares 2010 "Maine State Parks Year"	25
Maine Students Recognized for Energy Conservation Tips	28
Governor Delivers State of the State Address	30
Governor Demonstrates New Free Tool to Help Mainers Improve Their Health.....	48
Governor Celebrates \$35 million Grant to Expand Passenger Rail in Maine	50
Maine Department of Corrections' Facility "Going Greener" With New Biomass Thermal Heating System	51
Governor Announces Nominee to Board of Corrections.....	53
Thaxter Trafton Sworn in as Commissioner of Economic Development	54
Business Leaders Across the State Meet at Governor's Job Summit	55
Governor Baldacci Nominates Three to Maine Courts.....	57
Eliza Townsend Nominated to Head Department of Conservation.....	58
Dale McCormick Sworn in as MaineHousing Director	59
State Agencies Closed Monday and Tuesday	60
Maine Receives Critical Funding to Expand Health Workforce and Technology.....	61
Governor Mourns Passing of Eva Price	63
Maine Awarded \$14 Million to Support Critical Ports.....	64
Governor's Statement on Canning Facility Closure in Prospect Harbor	65
Governor Celebrates 100 Years of Boy Scouts of America	66

Governor Baldacci Meets with Secretary Salazar and Atlantic Coast Governors	67
Governor Announces Nominations	69
Governor Visits Workers in Prospect Harbor.....	71
Governor Directs State Agencies to Work Collaboratively with Native American Tribes	72
Governor Orders Flag Flown at Half-Staff in Hanover and Rumford on Feb. 27	74
Governor Recognizes Reed & Reed for Commitment to Workplace Safety.....	75
Governor Baldacci Kicks-Off Census 2010 Partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau	77
Governor Mourns Passing of David Carpenter	78
Governor Announces Nominations	79
Governor Baldacci to Receive Public Health Award from American Medical Association	80
Governor Announces Nominations to Board of Education	82
Governor Recognizes American Red Cross	83
Governor Presents Changes to Proposed 2010-11 Budget	85
Governor Ceremonially Signs Truck Weights Bill.....	87
Governor Announces Nominations to District Court, FAME	88
Governor to Honor Two-Time Gold Medalist Seth Wescott	90
Governor Baldacci Encourages Maine Residents to Complete and Mail Back 2010 Census Forms.....	91
Governor Announces Nominations for Superintendents, Boards and Commissions.....	92
Governor Baldacci Proposes Plan to Put People Back to Work.....	95
State Agencies Closed Friday, March 12	97
Governor Baldacci Sets Administration Priorities for Budget Restorations	98
Governor Announces Nominations to LURC.....	100
Governor Ceremonially Signs Quality of Place Legislation	102
U.S. Census Bureau Distributes Census Forms	103
Maine Receives Critical Obesity Prevention Funds.....	105
Bestselling Authors Anita Shreve and Tess Gerritsen will Headline at Maine Festival of the Book.....	106
Maine Students Compete in Energy Efficiency Competition.....	108
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Encourage Recycling and Reuse of Consumer Products.....	109
Governor Calls for Aggressive Renewable Energy Development	110
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Maintain Veterans' Cemeteries.....	112
Governor Baldacci Signs Legislation to Balance Budget	113
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Protect Maine Consumers	114

President Obama to Speak to Maine People about Federal Health Care Reform.....	115
Maine Among Top States in H1N1 Vaccine Coverage	116
Governor Signs Legislation to Improve Air Quality in Maine.....	117
Governor Congratulates IDEXX Laboratories.....	118
Maine Takes Next Step in Expanding Health Information Technology	119
Governor Mourns Passing of Dr. Frederick Hutchinson	123
Governor Signs Prohibition on Debit Card Surcharges	124
Governor Supports Preble Street with Spaghetti Supper	125
Maine Civil War Web Site Unveiled	126
Governor Signs Legislation to Further Improve Tribal-State Relations	127
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Increase Investment in Maine Communities.....	128
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Keep Broadband Expansion on Track	129
Governor Signs Legislation to Increase R&D Investments.....	130
Governor Applauds Agreement on Job Creation Plan.....	131
Governor Honors Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault Award Recipients.....	133
Governor Creates The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force.....	134
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Help Search and Rescue Teams	137
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Expand Lyme Disease Awareness	138
Commissioner of Education Accepts National Position.....	139
Governor Signs Order to Put Maine in Better Position to Access Federal Education Funds.....	142
Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Grow Film Industry in Maine	144
Finance Commissioner Accepts Position with University of Maine Farmington	145
State Agencies Closed Monday and Tuesday, April 19th and 20th	146
Governor Welcomes New Business to Maine.....	147
Maine Wins \$30 Million Energy Efficiency Grant	148
Governor Baldacci Celebrates Earth Day	150
Governor Baldacci Forms Committee to Work on Implementation of Federal Health Care Reform.....	152
Governor Baldacci Announces Rail Task Force Membership.....	156
Governor Ceremonially Signs Brunswick Redevelopment Legislation	161
Governor Mourns Passing of Kay Lebowitz	162
Governor Baldacci Honors Fitness Award Winners	163
Governor Orders Flag Flown at Half-Staff in Bangor on April 30.....	165

Governor Baldacci Says Maine Ready to Deploy Resources to Gulf Coast.....	166
Governor Baldacci Receives German Friendship Award.....	167
Governor Baldacci Celebrates Major Gift from Harold Alfond Foundation to MaineGeneral	168
Governor Mourns Death of Soldier from Maine	169
Governor Requests Major Disaster Declaration	170
Governor Ceremonially Signs Universal Childhood Immunization Legislation.....	175
Governor Celebrates Landmark Energy Legislation.....	176
Governor Mourns Passing of John F. Conley	178
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Sunday, May 16.....	179
Governor Ceremonially Signs Consumer Protection Legislation	180
Governor Names State Budget Officer as Acting Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services	181
Governor's Statement on Upcoming Visit from U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu.....	182
Governor Holds Bill Signing Ceremonies	183
State Agencies Closed Friday and Monday, May 28th and 31st.....	184
Federal Department of Energy Recognizes Maine's Leadership to Weatherize Homes	185
Governor Baldacci's Statement on Memorial Day.....	187
Governor Holds Three Bill Signing Ceremonies	188
Governor Holds Bill Signing Ceremonies for Three Bills Sponsored by Senator Alfond	189
Governor Celebrates Midcoast Campus, Highlights Importance of Question 4 on June Ballot.....	190
Governor Unveils New Investment Initiative.....	191
State Health Plan Public Hearings to Take Place Wednesday, June 9	193
Maine Recognized as National Leader in Weatherization.....	195
PUC Chairwoman to Step Down in July	197
U.S. Energy Secretary Visits Maine	198
Governor Baldacci Creates Working Group to Consider Laws Regarding ATV Use on Private Property .	199
Maine Workers' Compensation Reduces Assessments on Businesses.....	203
Governor Recognizes Students for Promoting Clean Water	204
Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties.....	205
Governor Recognizes Model Logging Certification Initiative.....	206
Governor Mourns Passing of Shep Lee.....	207
Energy Department Commits New Funding for Offshore Wind Development	208

Governor Orders Flag Lowered for Sen. Robert C. Byrd	210
Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties.....	211
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Friday, July 2	212
Maine State Health Plan Released	213
State Agencies Closed Friday and Monday, July 2 and 5	214
Governor Swears In Acting Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services	215
Governor Signs Special Budget and Expenditure Order	216
Maine State Library to Expand Access to Broadband Statewide.....	218
Date Set for Senate Confirmation Session.....	220
Governor Baldacci to Participate in National Governors Association Annual Meeting and Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.....	221
Governor Orders Flags Flown at Half-Staff on Tuesday, July 13 2010.....	223
Governor Signs Memorandum of Understanding on Ocean Energy Development with Premier of Nova Scotia.....	224
Governor Signs Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Initiatives with New Brunswick Premier .	226
Governor Nominates Ellen Schneider as Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services	228
Governor Nominates Two for Reappointment to Transportation Posts	229
Governor Baldacci Issues Executive Order Commemorating 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.....	230
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Thursday, July 22, in the City of Portland.....	234
State Finishes FY 2010 with \$70.4 Million Surplus	235
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Saturday, July 24, in the Town of Farmington.....	236
Governor Declares Emergency to Help Restore Power	237
Governor Celebrates New Company to Locate at Brunswick Landing	239
Governor Nominates Members to Retirement System, Labor Relations and Workers' Comp Boards....	240
Governor Celebrates 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act	241
Governor Names Acting Director of State Planning Office.....	243
Governor Recognizes Women Veterans	244
Governor Announces Nominations for Education Posts	245
Governor Makes Nominations to Human Rights Commission, Commission on Indigent Legal Services .	247
Governor Announces Nominations to FAME, MSHA and MRRRA.....	248
Governor Applauds TD Bank on Job Expansion	250

Governor Announces Judicial Nominees	251
Governor Hails Partnerships Leading to Amtrak Expansion to Brunswick	253
Governor Announces Nominations for University of Maine System Board of Trustees, Maine Maritime Academy Trustees.....	254
Governor Baldacci Nominates David Littell to Maine's Public Utilities Commission.....	255
Governor Nominates Members to Board of Environmental Protection and Efficiency Maine Trust.....	256
Governor Announces Nominations to Quality of Place Council	257
Maine Boat Builder Receives Boat of the Year Award.....	258
Governor Announces Nominations to the Gambling Control Board, MRDA, LDA and WCDA	259
State Agencies Closed Friday, August 6	260
Governor Baldacci Praises Vote by Sens. Snowe and Collins to Extend Medicaid and Education Funding	261
Governor Seeks to Raise Awareness of Asian Longhorned Beetle Danger	262
Governor Mourns Passing of Matthew Simmons.....	264
Governor Announces Nominations to the State Board of Corrections	265
Governor Announces Nominations to the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices	266
Governor Announces Nominations to Loring Development Authority	267
State Offers Web-Based Tool for Accessing Federal Health Care Reform Information	268
Governor Announces Nominations to Interagency Review Panel.....	269
Governor Praises Maine's U.S. Representatives in House Vote to Extend Assistance to Education, the Elderly and Disabled.....	271
Governor Mourns Death of Former State Representative Heidrich.....	272
Governor and First Lady Participate in "Read with ME." Initiative.....	273
Governor Baldacci Submits Application for Additional Federal Education Funding	275
Governor Swears in Tim Glidden as Acting Director of the Maine State Planning Office	277
Governor Recognizes Tidal Power Generation Operation in Eastport	278
Maine Gets Approval for Plan to Expand Health Information Technology	280
Governor Announces \$300,000 for the Maine Commission for Community Service to fund Grants to Engage More Volunteers	281
Governor Applauds Vote in Gouldsboro.....	282
Governor Celebrates Partnering Agreement Between Maine Company and Boeing	283
Governor Issues Statement on Auction of Moosehead Furniture.....	284

State Agencies Closed Friday, September 3 and Monday, September 6, 2010.....	285
Governor Urges Vigilance as Hurricane Earl Approaches Maine.....	286
Governor Names Acting Commissioner of Department of Environmental Protection	288
Governor Congratulates Ocean Renewable Power Company.....	289
Governor Baldacci Orders Flags Lowered to Half-Staff for Patriot Day.....	291
Governor Attends Opening of Customer Service Center in Presque Isle	292
Maine Recognized for Leadership in Covering Maine Citizens.....	293
Maine Receives Three National Awards for Online Government Services.....	295
Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties.....	297
Governor Baldacci Congratulates IDEXX and Pike on Compromise.....	298
Governor and First Lady Participate in Educare Central Maine.....	299
Governor and First Lady Participate in Educare Central Maine Ribbon Cutting	300
Governor Celebrates Generous Gift to Maine Soldiers	301
Governor Joins Iberdrola and Central Maine Power for Launch of Major Projects and Partnership Announcement with University of Maine.....	302
Governor Orders Curtailment of State Spending.....	303
Governor Baldacci's Statement on Sale of Domtar Mill in Baileyville	305
Governor Praises Maine Chamber of Commerce Workforce Initiative.....	306
Governor Baldacci's Statement on the Death of Kay Mills.....	307
Governors Baldacci and Lynch Create Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force.....	308
State Agencies Closed Friday, Oct. 8, and Monday, Oct. 11, 2010.....	311
Governor Signs Executive Order to Support School-Based Flu Vaccination Clinics.....	312
Maine Student in Online Competition for SportsKid of the Year 2010	315
Governor and Maine Technology Institute Announce \$7.25 Million in Maine Technology Asset Fund Grants.....	316
Governor Baldacci Commends Harold Alfond Foundation on Major Gift Announcement to University of Maine	318
Governor Baldacci Pleased with Federal Grants Supporting Maine Transportation Infrastructure	319
Significant Gift Brings New Health Opportunities to Maine	321
State Reaches Deal to Purchase Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway.....	322
Maine, New Hampshire Welcome Secretary LaHood to Memorial Bridge	324
Governor Recognizes Business Development Specialists Across Maine	325

Governor Views Rail Improvements	326
Governor Celebrates Groundbreaking for Caribou Connector.....	328
Governor Celebrates Ocean Gateway Pier II Groundbreaking	329
Governor Mourns Death of Marine with Maine Ties	330
Governor Baldacci's Statement on Cianbro Acquisition	331
Maine Schools Receive Innovation Grant	332
Governor Declares Limited Emergency to Help Restore Power	333
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Thursday, November 11	335
Governor Mourns Death of Soldier with Maine Ties.....	336
Governor Announces Judicial Nominees	337
Senate Confirmation Session Set for November 19	338
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Friday, November 19	339
Maine Health Care Quality Efforts Receive Significant Federal Support	340
Governor Urges EMMC and Nurses to Continue Talks	341
Maine's Economy Shows Signs of Improvement, Growth.....	342
Governor Mourns Death of Soldier with Maine Ties.....	344
Governor Celebrates "Invest in Maine" Initiative.....	345
Governor Directs Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff for National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	347
Arts Commission Delivers Report on Cultural Relations with New Brunswick.....	348
Governor Baldacci Honors Maine Companies Named to Inc. List of Fastest Growing Companies	350
Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Saturday, December 11	352
Governor Presents State of Maine Silver Star and Gold Star Honorable Service Medals	353
Public Hearing to be Held on Recommendations for Maine's Implementation of Federal Health Reform Law	355
Governor Baldacci Pledges State Support for Bushmaster Workers and Windham Community	356
Governor Applauds Sen. Collins' Efforts to Extend Pilot Program to Increase Truck Weight Limits in Maine	357
Governor Receives Final Report from Nature-Based Tourism Task Force.....	358
Task Force Delivers Recommendations for Funding Portsmouth-Kittery Bridge Replacement and Repairs	359
Official Portrait of Governor Baldacci Unveiled at State House	360
State Agencies Closed Thursday, Dec. 23 and Friday, Dec. 24, 2010.....	361

Governor Mourns Passing of State Rep. Everett McLeod Sr.	362
Governor Orders Flags at Half-Staff Wednesday, Dec. 22, through Friday, Dec. 24	363
Governor Recognizes Sugarloaf First Responders	364
Governor Requests FEMA Disaster Assessment for Counties Impacted by Dec. 12 Storm and Flooding	365

Governor Baldacci Names Elizabeth Townsend Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation

January 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today swore in Elizabeth Townsend as the new Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation.

“Eliza Townsend is a proven leader in State government and the conservation community,” said Governor Baldacci. “She has a distinguished career working on issues related to the environment, conservation, budget and policy and department management. She understands the critical need to balance the stewardship of the State’s resources with the responsible use of those resources.”

Townsend has served as Deputy Commissioner of the Department Conservation since 2007. Prior to joining the department, Townsend was Executive Director of the Maine League of Conservation Voters and the Maine Conservation Voters Education Fund (2000 – 2007).

She served four terms in the Maine State House of Representatives (1992 – 2000). For six years, Townsend was a member of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, serving two years as House Chair.

Townsend earned a B.A. from McGill University and a Masters from Carnegie-Mellon University. She lives in Portland.

In her acting capacity leading the department, Townsend is charged with directing the management, development and protection of some of Maine's most special places, including 17 million acres of forest land, 10.4 million acres of unorganized territory, 47 parks and historic sites and more than 480,000 acres of public reserved land. Townsend replaces Patrick McGowan, who resigned to run for Governor.

Governor Baldacci will nominate Townsend as Commissioner of the Department of Conservation during the next legislative session. Townsend’s appointment will be contingent on approval by the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee, and confirmation by the Senate.

Governor Names MaineHousing, Dirigo Health and Maine Retirement System Nominees

January 5, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the boards of the Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing), Dirigo Health and Trustees of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System.

MaineHousing

The Governor has nominated for reappointment MaineHousing Director Dale McCormick, as well as Board Members Don Gean and Carol Kontos. The Governor has nominated for new appointments Barbara Berry and Raymond Cota.

Dale McCormick has served five years as Director of MaineHousing. Prior to that, McCormick served eight years as Maine State Treasurer, the first woman to have held this high position in the State. McCormick also served in the State Senate for three terms. She currently resides in Augusta.

"Dale has demonstrated her leadership and commitment to the State. She has helped to ensure that Maine families have access to safe and affordable housing," said Governor Baldacci. "She has been a critical member of my team involved in making Maine a leader nationally in weatherization: reducing the cost of energy, reducing carbon emissions and growing jobs."

Don Gean, of Old Orchard Beach, has served as Executive Director of York County Shelter Programs Inc., for 25 years, providing critical support services and housing for homeless people and families. He has been active in numerous local, State and national organizations that are involved with homeless issues.

Carol Kontos has served as Associate Professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta for 28 years. She served from 1990 to 1998 in the Maine State House of Representatives, where she was elected House Majority Leader (1996 to 1998). She also served 1998 to 2000 in the Maine State Senate. Kontos resides in Windham.

Barbara Berry, of North Yarmouth, has more than 32 years experience in the real estate industry, and is currently employed by Coldwell Banker in Kennebunk.

Raymond Cota Jr. is Vice President for Real Estate at Webber Oil Company, where he has worked for 25 years. He served as Town Manager of Orono for five years (1979 to 1984). Cota is the current President of the Board of the Maine Real Estate & Development Association. He resides in Orono.

Dirigo Health

Frank O'Hara and Gary Reed are being newly appointed to the Dirigo Board. In addition, the Governor has nominated Jonathan Beal, Ed David, Mary McAleney and Maryanne Turowski for reappointment to the Board.

Frank O'Hara is co-owner of Planning Decisions Inc. He has worked in local, regional and State government, including serving as an aide to Governor Brennan for two years, and serving as Director of the Community Assistance Division of the Maine State Planning Office for three years. O'Hara is a resident of Hallowell.

Gary Reed, of Falmouth, is a former State Legislator, having served five terms in the Maine State House of Representatives. Reed, who is retired, worked 35 years at SD Warren and also served as a staff member in Senator Susan Collins' Portland office.

Jonathan Beal has served as an attorney in private practice for 25 years. He had worked at the National Labor Relations Board in Region One in Boston for 12 years prior to going into private practice. Beal is a resident of Portland.

Ed David, of Holden, serves as Deputy Chief Medical Examiner for the State of Maine and prior to that worked for 31 years at Neurology Associates of Eastern Maine.

Mary McAleney is retired from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), where she had served as District Director. Prior to her work at the SBA, McAleney was the Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator George J. Mitchell. McAleney resides in South Portland.

Mary Anne Turowski, of Newburgh, currently serves as the legislative and political director for the Maine State Employees Association. She has worked for the organization since 1993. Turowski worked for 14 years for the State of Maine at the Department of Human Services.

Maine Public Employees Retirement System

The Governor has nominated for reappointment George Burgoyne and Peter Leslie as Trustees to the Maine Public Employees Retirement System.

George Burgoyne, of Bangor, is a retired State employee, having worked at the Department of Health and Human Services from 1971 to 2007.

Peter Leslie is retired after being self-employed. Prior to that, Leslie founded and worked at the investment banking firm Leslie, Wienert & Co. Inc. Leslie is a resident of Waterford.

Nominations must be reviewed by the committee of jurisdiction and confirmed by the Senate.

Governor to Deliver State of the State Address on January 21

January 6, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci will deliver the State of the State address at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2010, in the House Chamber.

The Governor was invited to deliver the State of the State address before a Joint Session of the 124th Maine Legislature by Maine State Senate President Elizabeth Mitchell and Maine State House of Representatives Speaker Hannah Pingree.

Maine Companies Awarded Energy Efficiency Grants

January 6, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today announced \$8.9 million in grants to support 16 projects under Maine's Industrial Grant Program. Administered by the Maine Public Utility Commission's (PUC) Efficiency Maine program, the grants will save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support businesses that employ thousands of Maine workers.

"These grants will help industries in Maine meet our shared goals of decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels and growing good-paying jobs," said Governor Baldacci. "Energy efficiency and renewable energy development are keys to our economic future."

Joining the Governor at today's announcement were legislators, Maine Public Utility Commissioners, members of the Energy and Carbon Savings Trust and company representatives.

The Industrial Grant Program funds come from a combination of two sources: the federal Recovery Act and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative funds distributed by the Energy and Carbon Savings Trust. The \$8.9 million in grants will leverage more than \$81 million in private investments. Projects were selected based on how well their project added value to the Maine economy, saved energy and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

PUC Commission Chair Sharon Reishus said, "Maine's industrial sector presents great opportunities for energy savings, emissions reductions and economic stimulus. We are pleased to support projects that show exceptional promise in meeting these objectives."

Energy efficiency creates jobs in the green sector and preserves jobs in the companies that are undertaking the projects we are supporting today. The companies awarded grants today already employ approximately 7,000 workers in the State. According to the U.S. Department of Energy's method of calculating job creation, the investment of \$90 million dollars in federal, State and private resources will create more than 950 jobs.

PUC Commissioner Jack Cashman noted, "This program will stimulate the Maine economy, make our businesses more competitive, and move us toward a more secure energy future."

The Governor said that the Industrial Grant Program is another important step in promoting energy efficiency.

Last year, the Legislature passed the Governor's comprehensive energy package, An Act Regarding Maine's Energy Future, which brings established the goal to weatherize all residences and 50 percent of businesses by 2030 and reduce the State's consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030.

"Maine is leading the way toward a new energy future," said Governor Baldacci. "Our success is built on innovative leadership and the public-private partnerships. We have been able to use scarce resources to

leverage significant investments in energy efficiency and conservation. And we are providing opportunities to families and businesses to become involved in development of renewable energy.”

A table of the grantees follows.

Company/Applicant,Town, Efficiency Maine Large Industrial Grant Amount
--

Verso Paper Corp., Bucksport, \$2,000,000

Fraser Paper (KWh, Madawaska, \$198,240

NewPage, Rumford, \$300,000

Katahdin Paper Company, Millinocket, \$235,200
--

Fairchild Semiconductor, South Portland, \$537,000
--

Madison Paper, Madison, \$357,000

Maine Renewable Energy Consortium, South Portland, \$1,000,000
--

Fraser Paper (GHG), Madawaska, \$393,008
--

Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, \$1,000,000

Prime Tanning Company, Hartland, \$667,500
--

Bowdoin College, Brunswick, \$400,000

Old Town Fuel and Fiber, Old Town, \$377,000
--

Lincoln Paper and Tissue, Lincoln, \$375,000
--

Johnson Outdoors Watercraft, Inc, Old Town, \$113,000

Tex Tech Industries, Monmouth, \$746,776
--

Fraser Timber, Ashland, \$227,500

Total \$8,927,224

Governor Supports Youth Program in National Competition

January 6, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci encourages Mainers to support the Riverview Foundation in an online competition.

Riverview Foundation AIM – Access to Inspiration and Motivation – is the only program from New England that is a finalist in the competition sponsored by the social networking site Facebook and Clorox Clean-Up. Of 50 finalists nationwide, only the top five in votes received will be presented with a \$10,000 grant and the distinction of being featured in People Magazine.

Riverview Foundation AIM is an after-school program for middle school children in York, Cumberland and Sagadahoc Counties. The program provides structured activities to benefit the health, welfare and academics of participating young people.

“Riverview Foundation AIM is a wonderful program designed improve the academic, social and emotional needs of the youth it serves through a partnership with the schools,” said Governor Baldacci.

For more information and to vote, go to the Facebook page that is linked off Riverview Foundation’s Web site: <http://www.riverviewfoundation.com/>

People can vote once a day until Jan. 17, the end of the competition. Voters must be signed in to Facebook to vote.

Governor Statement on Major Federal Award to University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center

January 8, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today learned that the University of Maine's Advanced Structure and Composites Center has been awarded a \$12.4 million grant from federal Recovery Act funds.

The funds will enable the Center to build and test offshore wind technologies in the laboratory before putting them in deep water. Funds will also enable the center to develop nanocomposite materials, using Maine's abundant wood supply to manufacture composite material that will be stronger than steel, and thereby increasing the potential capabilities and markets for composites.

"The University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center has been central to our vision of increasing manufacturing and technology jobs here in Maine, promoting renewable energy production, and growing the economy and jobs in the State," said Governor Baldacci. "I am pleased that the Federal government has again recognized the work of Dr. Habib Dagher and his team. The Center plays a vital role in realizing Maine's potential for deep water offshore wind generation and Maine's ability to become more energy independent."

Maine has been recognized as a leader in wind energy development. There are currently 300 megawatts operating or under construction in Maine, with another 450 megawatts of wind in various stages of development throughout the State. Already, Maine is home to 95 percent of the operating on-shore wind capacity in New England.

The Governor said that the potential of our offshore wind resources is even greater, estimated at 100 gigawatts, or three-to-four times the current peak demand for all of New England.

Last October, the U.S. Energy Department awarded the State \$8 million of Federal Recovery Act funds to expand efforts to develop offshore wind capacity. This grant represents the foundation of an effort that will lead to the deployment of the first 25 MW floating "Stepping Stone" ocean wind farm in the world in 10 years.

In December, the Baldacci administration named demonstration sites for offshore wind technology located in Maine coastal waters. Three sites were identified by the process, which included reviewing the geography of the coast to meet certain parameters and extensive meetings with stakeholders. The University of Maine will be using the site off Monhegan Island for its testing.

Maine has established a bold vision of reducing the State's consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030. Maine has set ambitious but achievable targets for development of wind power.

The University has the goal for the first demonstration turbine to be operating in the water in 2011.

Governor Announces Homeowner Weatherization Incentives

January 8, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today unveiled a new benefit available to Mainers who improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

"The Maine Home Performance program is open for business," said Governor Baldacci. "All Maine homeowners are able to participate. By making eligible improvements in their homes, they can access rebates of up to \$3,000 and save between 25 percent and 50 percent on their home heating bill."

The program, administered by Efficiency Maine, is an important way to encourage Maine people to consider improving their homes to save energy. Last year the Legislature passed the Governor's energy bill that set the goal to weatherize all Maine homes and half of Maine businesses by 2030.

There is no income limit to participate in the Maine Home Performance program. To qualify for rebates under program, homeowners must have an energy audit performed by a certified audit and improvements made must achieve at least 25 percent savings in heating and hot water fuel usage.

A full list of eligible improvements and eligibility requirements are found on Efficiency Maine's web site, www.efficiencymaine.com/mainehomeperformance.htm In addition, a toll free number is available at 877-334-6583, and 2-1-1.

The Governor was joined at the kickoff of the Maine Home Performance Program by Speaker of the House Hannah Pingree; Sharon Reishus, Chair of the Maine Public Utilities Commission; Dale McCormick, Director of Maine State Housing Authority; John Brautigam, Director of Efficiency Maine; Richard Burbank of Evergreen Home Performance, a qualified weatherization contractor; and a couple, Stuart Finkelstein and Jane Funk, from Warren who recently had their home weatherized by Burbank. The couple received a check from the Maine Home Performance program of \$3,000.

Maine Public Utilities Commission Chair Sharon Reishus noted, "Many Maine homeowners would save significantly on their energy bill by implementing basic measures such as weather sealing, insulation, and basic steps to maximize the efficiency of the home's heating system."

The Governor said that Maine Home Performance program will also create jobs for qualified weatherization auditors, installers and retailers. The program is based on quality workmanship by certified professionals, generating real energy savings for every participating homeowner. In addition, carbon emissions will be reduced through the energy improvements.

"Dependence on unstable foreign energy is dangerous for our economy, environment and national security," said Governor Baldacci. "There's a better way. The resources that flow out of our State could sorely be used here at home, and that's why my Administration has been aggressive in energy efficiency and renewable energy development. The Maine Home Performance program will help ensure Maine families stay warmer, safer and more economically secure."

Earlier this week, the Governor announced \$8.9 million in grants to energy efficiency projects in the industrial sector. Those grants will impact thousands of jobs and leverage more than \$81 million in additional private sector funding.

For more information about the Maine Home Performance program, please call 2-1-1 or 877-334-6583, or visit www.energymaine.com/mainehomeperformance.htm

Governor Names Ethics and Gambling Control Board Nominees

January 11, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today announced the nomination of Margaret Matheson to the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices. He also announced that he has nominated Joseph Laliberte and Harry Stickney to the Gambling Control Board. The three nominations announced today are new appointments.

"I am pleased to put these nominations forward. These talented individuals represent the highest standards of excellence in their fields and will be tremendous assets to the State as they take on these new, important roles," said Governor Baldacci.

Margaret Matheson of Augusta was recommended to the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Senate Minority Leader and the House Minority Leader. Matheson retired last year as Revisor of Statutes of the Maine Legislature. She had served 16 years as Revisor after serving as principal attorney at the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. Matheson is a graduate of Colby College and the University of Maine School of Law.

Joseph Laliberte is CEO for Corporate Intelligence, Inc. Prior to that, Laliberte served in a variety of capacities over 16 years at the U.S. Air Force Office of Investigations at the Pentagon. He also served from 1980 to 1985 as Sheriff of Androscoggin County. Laliberte is a resident of Lewison. He is a graduate of the University of Maine.

Harry Stickney, a resident of Augusta, is retired from MaineGeneral Medical Center, where he was a lead security officer and instructor. He served for more than 30 years with the Maine Army National Guard before retiring as Command Sergeant Major, and 20 years with the Maine State Police as a trooper. Stickney is a graduate of Thomas College.

Nominations must be reviewed by the Legal and Veterans Affairs Committee and confirmed by the full Senate.

Governor and Maine Legislature Express Support for Haiti

January 14, 2010

Cash Donations the Best Way to Assist Earthquake Recovery

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci and the State Legislature today joined to express Maine's support for the people of Haiti. In a State House press conference held with the Maine chapters of the American Red Cross, the Governor and members of the Legislature said that there's been an outpouring of support from Maine people to assist relief efforts in Haiti following the devastating earthquake that hit Tuesday.

"The tragedy of - and still-unfolding events in - Haiti have caused us to take stock and reflect upon our blessings here at home, upon the fragility of life, and upon our global family," said Governor Baldacci. "That's why we are called here today to say that Maine stands as one with those struggling to survive in Haiti. The unimaginable loss of life and the continuing dire needs of those who survived the earthquake in Haiti have touched us all. As Mainers frequently do - even in this time of great economic distress here at home - we are eager to help."

"In spite of the difficult times here at home, Mainers are once again rising to the occasion and doing what they can to help the people of Haiti get through this terrible tragedy," said Senate President Elizabeth Mitchell. "These acts of charity will strengthen the relief effort as the international community works to rescue victims and eventually rebuild the country."

"The devastation caused by the recent earthquake in Haiti is a tragedy beyond measure and another setback for an already struggling nation," said Speaker of the House Hannah Pingree. "It is important for all of us, members of the international community, to keep the survivors of this disaster in our thoughts and lend support where we can."

"At a time like this, we all put aside partisan differences and come together to assist those who are facing unimaginable devastation," said Senator Jonathan Courtney, Assistant Minority Leader of the Senate. "We stand with the Governor and wholeheartedly support his efforts to enlist help for the people of Haiti."

"Mainers are a generous people, and it's heartening to see the outpouring of support for the victims of this earthquake," said House Republican Leader Josh Tardy. "We can never know what nature has in store for us, but it's good to see people pulling together when a disaster like this strikes."

The Governor, Legislators and the Red Cross said that the best way to help Haitians is to make a monetary donation to a trusted relief agency. The U.S. State Department's U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the lead agency for the country's response, advises that cash donations can be put to work immediately by relief agencies already on the ground.

Following major disasters, many people want to immediately provide goods or services, or go to the area to help, but the Governor said that there is no infrastructure to support independent volunteers or unsolicited goods.

The Governor also reminds Mainers who want to help the people in Haiti that they should be sure they are giving through a reputable organization. A list of relief organizations follow.

How to Help and for More Information:

- Text "HAITI" to "90999" and a donation of \$10 will be given automatically to the Red Cross to help with relief efforts, charged to your cell phone bill.
- Go to the Red Cross site: www.redcross.org
- An index of relief organizations working in Haiti , endorsed by USAID, is available at: <http://www.interaction.org/crisis-list/earthquake-haiti>
- Or at www.usaid.gov
- AidMatrix, a partner with the State of Maine in disaster donations, offers an online portal for donations to relief organizations working in Haiti. <http://vad.aidmatrix.org/vadxml.cfm?driveid=4121>
- Americans seeking information about family members in Haiti should call 1-888-407-4747
- The FBI's statement about fundraising fraud: www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel10/earthquake011310.htm
- Suspected Internet or e-mail fraud can be reported to the Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov

Governor Renews Order Allowing Larger Trucks on Interstate

January 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today renewed a proclamation to allow a change in truck weight limits on Maine's Interstate highway system. The initial proclamation was issued on Dec. 17, 2009.

"Moving heavy truck traffic off Maine's secondary roads and onto the Interstate that was built to handle them is a matter of public safety," Governor Baldacci said. "Our experience over the past month has been positive and shows that keeping trucks off small, secondary roads reduces the risk to the public and helps goods move more expeditiously across the State."

Before the Governor's original proclamation in December, almost 300 miles of Maine Interstate was limited to 80,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, despite the fact that there's a 100,000-pound limit on Maine non-Interstate roads, and near or above 100,000-pound limits on roads in surrounding states and provinces.

On Dec. 16, 2009, President Obama signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010, which included a provision inserted by Maine Sen. Susan Collins and supported by the State's entire Congressional Delegation that created a one-year pilot program raising weight limits on the Interstate system. Before the federal law change, Maine could not raise its limits.

The text of the proclamation follows.

WHEREAS, the US Congress recently enacted a provision allowing certain vehicles up to 100,000 pounds to travel on the entire length of the Maine Interstate Highway System, for a period of one year; and

WHEREAS, I signed a Proclamation on December 17th, 2009, declaring a State of Emergency, in order to allow the State to take immediate advantage of the public safety and economic benefits to be derived from allowing 100,000 pound 3-axle truck tractors operating in combination with a tri-axle semi-trailer to operate on the Maine Interstate Highway System; and

WHEREAS, the State of Emergency expires 30 days from the date of signing of the Proclamation; and

WHEREAS, continuing the State of Emergency will allow 3-axle truck tractors operating in combination with a tri-axle semi-trailer of up to 100,000 pounds to operate on the Maine Interstate Highway system, bringing greater safety, fuel efficiency and economic benefits to the State; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature will have an opportunity within the next 30 days to consider legislation to conform Maine statute to the federal exemption;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of Maine, find that these conditions constitute a civil emergency under 37-B MRSA section 742, and do hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists for the entire State of Maine.

This Emergency Proclamation shall remain in effect until I have declared the emergency to have terminated, or as otherwise provided by law.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed this proclamation in Augusta this 14th day of January in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Ten

John E. Baldacci

Governor

Governor Declares 2010 “Maine State Parks Year”

January 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today declared 2010 “Maine State Parks Year” in recognition of the 75th anniversary of the Maine state parks system.

Joined by legislators, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands officials and local civic leaders, the Governor read the proclamation during an afternoon ceremony in the Hall of Flags at the State Capitol.

In comments made before announcing the proclamation, Governor Baldacci said, “Our Maine State Parks are a vital part of what makes Maine a great place to live in and visit.”

“State parks,” he continued, “give Maine people and visitors alike a reason to be happy and healthy, providing recreation while conserving important locations in our State.”

The Governor also commented his own experience and that of his family at Maine state parks, recalling how several years ago, he and his son, Jack, took a canoe trip on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

“It was an unforgettable experience, giving us memories that will last forever,” he said.

Governor Baldacci also congratulated the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL), under the Maine Department of Conservation (MDOC), on the 75th anniversary and noted the hard work and dedication of park staff.

The Maine state parks system was established in 1935 when the Maine Legislature created the State Park Commission. In 1938, a group of local business owners donated 100 acres of land in Presque Isle, which became Aroostook State Park, Maine’s first state park.

Today the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands consists of 48 state parks, including 12 campgrounds; the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and the Penobscot River Corridor; 15 historic sites; 460 boat launch facilities owned or built by the Bureau; and 260 miles of state-owned or leased trails.

During the ceremony, Eliza Townsend, MDOC acting commissioner, thanked Governor Baldacci for his support of the Maine state parks. She noted that with more than 2.2 million visitors annually, the state parks contribute \$100 million per annum to the state economy. Commissioner Townsend also commented on the extensive support from volunteers and sponsors, who have provided 49,000 hours of volunteer time to the parks in the past year.

Will Harris, BPL director, welcomed those present at the ceremony and all people throughout the state to the state parks for the 75th anniversary. He said that numerous activities have been planned for the year. Harris noted that the celebratory year was “a great time for renewal of those family memories for everyone in Maine.”

Several legislators also made comments on the importance of the state park to Maine’s economy and the well being of residents. Sen. John Nutting (D-District 17), sponsor of a bill passed last session to

prohibit smoking in public areas of state parks, pointed out the success of the bill and its general acceptance. He said he had been told by Director Harris that there have been no complaints from the public about the new regulation.

Rep. Jeff McCabe (D-Skowhegan) stressed that Maine's parks provided affordable family fun and were accessible to all people of all capabilities. Rep. David Webster (D-Freeport) acknowledged the two state parks located in his hometown, Bradbury Mountain and Wolfe's Neck Woods, and commented on their importance as places for people visiting Freeport to recreate.

Theresa Fowler, Presque Isle Area Chamber of Commerce executive director, also spoke, emphasizing the relationship of Maine's first state park, Aroostook, to the local community. Elaine Clark, president of the Friends of Maine State Parks, made comments stressing the importance of continued support and financing of the state parks.

The proclamation text follows.

WHEREAS, more than 2.2 million visitors annually visit Maine's parks and historic sites, creating family memories and traditions; enjoying some of the most beautiful sites in Maine; participating in numerous outdoor activities; improving their health and well being; experiencing nature and Maine's landscape; and appreciating Maine's history; and

WHEREAS, the Maine State Parks system contributes more than \$100 million annually to the economy of the state; and

WHEREAS, in 1935, the Maine Legislature created the State Park Commission, composed of three Maine citizens plus the Forest Commissioner and the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Game; in 1938, a group of local business owners donated 100 acres of land in Presque Isle, and Aroostook State Park became Maine's first state park; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, the first director of state parks, Harold J. Dyer, was appointed; 1965 marked the first year the Maine State Parks had more than 1million visitors; in 1972, the Maine State Parks Commission became the Department of Parks and Recreation; and in 1974, the Bureau of Parks and Recreation was placed under the Department of Conservation; and

WHEREAS, today the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands consists of 32 State parks, including ocean – and lake-front beaches and 12 campgrounds; the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and the Penobscot River Corridor; 15 historic sites; 460 boat launch facilities owned or built by the Bureau; and 260 miles of state-owned or leased trails; and

WHEREAS, park system staff perform their duties with dedication and high standards of responsibility; providing not only clean, well-appointed facilities for the benefit and enjoyment of all visitors, but also outdoor recreation, nature education, and historical knowledge; and

WHEREAS, Maine State Parks remain vital places for Mainers and visitors to find refuge and refreshment, and the parks continue to develop to meet the needs of visitors now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, the year 2010 marks the 75th anniversary year of the formation of the Maine State parks,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim the year 2010 as

MAINE STATE PARKS YEAR

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Maine Students Recognized for Energy Conservation Tips

January 19, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Maine Public Utilities Commission Chair Sharon Reishus to recognize six Maine students at the seventh annual Governor's Energy Savings Tips Contest Award Ceremony. The Governor said that the efforts of the young participants in the contest bolster the Administration's efforts to reduce energy use statewide.

"Our young people across the State have been sharing great ideas about how we each can do our part to conserve energy, saving money and our environment," said the Governor. "These 4th, 5th, and 6th graders are demonstrating leadership in conserving energy. We can all learn by their example."

The Governor presented each winner with an iPod Nano and a special backpack that contains a solar powered panel charger for the iPod.

Governor Baldacci said that if people use the ideas of Maine's young people who participated in the energy tips contest, then the State will continue to be a leader in the nation's efforts to reduce energy use.

"I commend these youngsters for helping to remind us all that we have opportunities every day to save energy and make our world a better place," said the Governor. "It's the young people that we will continue to look to for innovation and new ideas that will keep Maine competitive into the future."

The list of winners by grade level follows.

4th Grade School Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Tais Ferreira

School: All Saints Catholic School, Bangor

Winning Tip: "Instead of using your car every single day to go to school or your job, try to carpool with someone like your friend or take a bus. So we don't pollute the earth that much."

4th Grade Home Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Michaela Jordan

School: Jewett-Hanson School, Buxton

Winning Tip: "Don't give up your holiday lights because of the high energy usage, use instead solar powered LED Christmas lights. They automatically turn on as it gets dark and off again in the morning."

5th Grade School Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Riley Bartash

School: Mattanawcook Junior High School, Lincoln

Winning Tip: "Put printers and photocopiers on sleep mode instead of leaving them on."

5th Grade Home Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Libby Cook

School: Morison Memorial School, Corinth

Winning Tip: "Use cold water when washing clothes."

6th Grade School Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Megan Haney

School: Central Middle School, Corinth

Winning Tip: "Start an Energy Patrol at school. Vote 4-5 responsible people to turn lights off, and shut off computers at the end of the day."

6th Grade Home Energy Tip Winner:

Student: Dylan Fitzhenry

School: Bay Ridge Elementary School, Cutler

Winning Tip: "Hang out laundry or buy a laundry rack."

Governor Delivers State of the State Address

January 21, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci delivered his annual State of the State Address this evening before a Joint Session of the 124th Maine Legislature.

In his speech, the Governor said that in these challenging times, Maine people rise to the occasion, and that working together, Maine will have a more secure future.

“Despite the difficulties we face, the hard choices and hard work ahead, the next chapter in Maine’s history will be one of resurgence, growth and opportunity,” said the Governor. “The choices we make will help to determine which way Maine goes.”

Governor Baldacci highlighted a number of initiatives that will help the State be on a solid foundation for economic and job growth as the global economy begins to improve. First, the State must tackle the current revenue shortfall. The Governor introduced his supplemental budget last month which closes a \$438 million shortfall by continuing to streamline government administration, finding additional efficiencies and reducing spending. The Governor said that because working families and businesses cannot afford any tax increases, he continues to oppose raising taxes to balance the budget.

Instead of taxing our State out of our financial woes, the Governor said that Maine can grow our way to a better future. Maine’s developing renewable energy sector and pursuit of energy efficiency goals provide promising areas of growth. Maine leads New England in wind power generation, and with federal grants and partnerships from the private sector, exciting new opportunities exist to harness deep sea wind energy. The Governor announced that he will submit legislation based on his Ocean Energy Task Force report to put increased emphasis on the technologies that will enable Maine to aggressively produce offshore wind by 2030 and create new jobs.

The Governor recently announced new Efficiency Maine grants that will enable Maine businesses to save and grow jobs. The initial award of \$9 million in grants leverage \$81 million in private investment. Using estimates from the U.S. Department of Energy, the public and private funds will yield 950 jobs.

Another new benefit began this month that is available to all Maine homeowners, regardless of income. The Maine Home Performance program enables Mainers who make eligible improvements in their homes to access rebates of up to \$3,000 and save between 25 percent and 50 percent on their home heating bill. Mainers can access information about the program at the Web site <http://www.energymaine.com/mainehomeperformance.htm>

The Governor also outlined a pilot project called the Great Maine Forests Initiative. Building on the Baldacci Administration’s achievement of bringing stakeholder together to conserve nearly 1.3 million acres of land, the Great Maine Forests Initiative would create large scale conservation areas while providing stable and sustainably managed sources of wood for the forest products and energy sectors.

In health care, Governor Baldacci noted that Maine continues through Dirigo Health Reform to increase access to quality, affordable health care. The Governor announced a new, free Web-based resource available to Maine people that enables them to confidentially assess their health status and obtain information on low-cost services and other resources in their community. Called "Keep ME Well," the site connects people to the valuable public health system that has been streamlined and strengthened under the Baldacci Administration. The Web site will be available Friday, Jan. 22 by logging on to www.keepmewell.org

The Governor also said the Jobs Summit that will be held in Augusta on Feb. 9th will yield ideas on ways the State and private sector can support job growth in the current economy as well as looking to future opportunities to grow jobs.

In the area of education, the Governor said that ensuring quality for the investment is critical. Half of every dollar spent by the State supports education. Administrative consolidation already enacted means more resources directed to the classroom where they do the most good. The Governor proposes to further encourage innovation and achieve greater accountability, including adoption of core national benchmarks.

Governor Baldacci also noted that on the ballot this June, Maine voters will have the opportunity to support bonds that provide vital investments in economic development, green energy, higher education and others. In addition, the June ballot will also contain a question about taxes. The Governor urged Maine voters to reject the People's Veto so that middle-class taxpayers can obtain the advantage of the tax rate cut that the Legislature passed last year.

The text of the State of the State is attached.

State of the State

Governor John Elias Baldacci

7 p.m., Thursday, January 21, 2010

Madam President, Madam Speaker, Madam Chief Justice, members of the Legislature, members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests and my fellow citizens:

I can not remember a time that has presented Maine with such hard choices and such great opportunities.

It's a bit of a contradiction – to talk about economic hardship and opportunity in the same breath.

But that is the situation we face today.

In the last 12 months, State revenues have fallen by \$1.1 billion dollars. Unemployment has topped 8 percent; housing and businesses are struggling; and people are uncertain and anxious.

It's a time of great turmoil.

But it's also a time of incredible opportunity and revolutionary change.

A time when our State is breaking with the comfortable past to blaze a new trail.

We have come together to say enough, to put our foot down and to put an end to the circumstances that have held our people and our economy hostage.

Today, we are laying the groundwork for economic revitalization and freedom from the tyranny of foreign oil.

Are we there yet? No.

But we are on our way.

Despite the difficulties we face, the hard choices and hard work ahead, the next chapter in Maine's history will be one of resurgence, growth and opportunity.

As I report to you tonight on the State of the State, I am not sullen or deterred by the road ahead.

Because I know beyond question or doubt that the people of this State – our greatest resource – can persevere and overcome any challenge.

And they are looking to us, the men and women gathered here in this great hall of the people, to lead.

To balance tough choices and compassion.

To reach forward to welcome a bright future, but also to make sure opportunity doesn't leave anyone behind.

I see a Maine that is energy secure, with highly educated and successful people.

Natural resources that are protected, accessible and put to work.

A place where innovation and creativity prevail.

And cities, towns and villages draw people from around the world to a quality of life unmatched.

This is our job.

We are in the midst of unprecedented times.

Locked in a struggle between recession and recovery.

The choices we make will help to determine which way Maine goes.

About a month ago, I submitted to the Legislature my plan to close a \$438 million dollar shortfall in the State budget.

It continues themes you've heard from me before: A leaner government, increased efficiencies and frugality.

The causes of the shortfall are well-known.

Our State and country are beset by a global recession that has destroyed jobs and wealth, and undermined consumer confidence.

My plan includes tough choices and pain.

There's no way around that hard truth.

It will impact people and their communities.

It won't be easy.

During public hearings on the budget, we heard people talk about their economic plight.

Many of them told compelling, personal stories about how State government touches their lives, the good work that it does, especially in the area of human services.

I am committed to maintaining life-sustaining services, but we can't avoid reductions.

We must change the way we help people.

And we'll continue our mission to reduce administration, so there are more dollars available for what's really important.

If we can't break down the walls between State agencies to save money during this crisis, how can we tell other folks they need to go without?

My budget proposal also contains new efforts to streamline government.

I've suggested improving cooperation between the State's four natural resource agencies – the folks who help us manage our forests, fish, water and wild life.

They have so much in common, but are artificially broken into four pieces.

We can save money and improve results by helping them to work better together.

During the last seven years, my administration has been aggressive about cutting the size of State government.

We've eliminated 1,000 positions, about 8.8 percent of the State's workforce.

State workers have taken shutdown days, lost pay raises and are now required to pay a portion of their health care.

We've combined State agencies and departments, school administrations, and county and State corrections.

And we are continuing our efforts to find efficiencies and to reshape government at all levels to be less expensive.

I am convinced that government at all levels can operate more efficiently, that administrative costs can be reduced through greater cooperation.

We've seen it work with the Board of Corrections and with regional school units, saving millions of property tax dollars.

Every dollar that we save from reduced administration means more resources for direct services – those places where the money does the most good.

It's hard to change structures. But we must.

About 46 cents of every dollar brought into the General Fund is returned to county and municipal governments.

There is no way that the State can absorb such a sharp reduction in revenues without impacting other levels of government.

Through school administrative consolidation and our unified correction systems, we have reduced the load on local governments.

But the times demand more.

While it's a tentative first step, I was encouraged by the election results in Brewer this fall. Voters there approved a ballot question that will begin the process of greater cooperation between their city and Bangor.

Maine has almost 500 municipalities plus 16 counties. We have a local government for every 2,500 State residents.

We cannot afford that redundancy and the duplication.

But we have also recognized that local governments need help.

With our unified corrections system, we have curbed State and local spending for jails and frozen property taxes needed for this area, helping counties to hold increases to their lowest level in many years.

The system is projected to save \$189 million dollars in property taxes over the next five years.

In addition, school funding for this budget will still be \$352 million dollars more than it was when I took office seven years ago, even after the proposed reductions.

And over the last five years, State aid to schools has increased faster than the cost of essential programs and services for the classrooms.

For communities willing to change, they can find a way through this recession.

Now the budget is in your hands, the Legislature.

Just last spring, we worked together to cut State spending by \$500 million dollars.

At the time, it might have seemed impossible.

But leaders in the Legislature showed courage and resolve. They put aside partisanship and they trusted one another.

When the work was done, the cuts were made and we didn't raise taxes. For some, on both sides of the aisle, it was a hard vote to cast. But it was the right thing to do.

Now, we are again faced with the necessity to cut spending.

And once again, I am confident that working with the Legislature we can find a bipartisan path forward.

There should be no illusions.

There are no easy answers.

We must balance core government functions while protecting the vulnerable and safeguarding our economy.

While we still have a long way to go, there are signs that things are beginning to turn around.

When I addressed this body last year, I spoke about my visit to Domtar in Washington County. The plant had just announced that it was indefinitely closing.

I'm happy to say that today, 300 workers are back on the job and the owners of the company are committed to finding a business model that will work.

Maine is ready to help. We want to keep those men and women working.

We shouldn't take any action that will jeopardize recovery.

I will not support a tax increase to balance this budget.

Working families and businesses simply can't afford it.

I don't question the motives of those who seek a tax increase. They look around and see real problems and people struggling.

Their heart tells them they have to do something. My heart says the same thing.

But I know that the best way to help all Maine people is to promote job growth and economic recovery.

To spread opportunity and give our people a chance for prosperity.

We can't tax our way out of our problems, but we can grow our way out.

As President Kennedy said: "A rising tide lifts all boats."

And that's why I have an aggressive agenda that is already creating jobs today and will continue to create jobs for years to come.

It begins with our people and our natural resources.

Right now, Maine is leading New England in wind power generation.

And every day this important sector is growing.

Producing renewable and safe electricity.

But we have only begun to tap the potential for wind.

Work going on today by Habib Dagher at the University of Maine, with private-sector partners and critical support from the federal government, is positioning our State at the forefront of a new energy revolution.

We have it within our power to develop new, cutting edge sources of energy that can help to forever reshape the world.

From start to finish, Maine has a role to play. We can develop the technology; use composites from the University of Maine to build the turbines; and lower electricity rates.

That means good jobs.

It's also important for communities to see the benefits of new energy development.

That's why I am supporting legislation that makes sure wind projects produce tangible benefits to host communities.

Real benefits that communities can see and feel, like lower property taxes or improved public services.

There is a burning urgency to the work we are doing. We can not wait; too much is in the balance.

What's remarkable is that the right and left should be united on the need to free ourselves from foreign oil and all that dependency does to our people, our economy and our world.

Whether you believe in global warming or not, ending our dependency on foreign oil is a matter of national security that demands action now.

In 2008, this Legislature set a goal of producing 2 Gigawatts of wind power by 2020.

With 430 Megawatts already permitted, Maine is ahead of the schedule.

We are on the brink of a new day;

Will we allow the clock to be turned back to midnight or will we embrace the dawn?

The choice is as stark as night and day.

In the coming weeks, I will submit legislation to continue our aggressive pursuit of offshore wind energy.

The plan, which is the result of my Ocean Energy Task Force, will help to spark this new industry and confirm Maine's leadership role.

We will set a target of producing 5 Gigawatts of electricity from offshore turbines by 2030. That sounds like a long time from now, but in the birth of a new technology it's just a blink.

In just two years, there will be a prototype turbine in the water, producing electricity. And in five years, the amount of power produced will double.

Already, our efforts are being recognized.

The DeepCwind Consortium at the University of Maine already includes more than 35 public and private partners.

The project has earned nearly \$25 million dollars in competitive grants and is in line for additional federal support.

Maine competed nationally and was one of just 12 sites in the entire country that has received this support to construct an offshore wind laboratory.

There are no sure things, but the plan has tremendous potential to create thousands of jobs in Maine and attract billions of dollars worth of investment.

Permitted and approved wind power development in Maine already represents more than \$1 billion dollars of capital investment in our economy.

When it comes to energy, Maine's potential is not limited to wind alone.

Matt Simmons of Rockland is one of the world's leading thinkers about the oil industry and its limitations.

Matt founded the Ocean Energy Institute, which is working with some of the most prominent researchers in the world to develop a new source of energy.

Matt is working on an innovative approach that would utilize wind and tidal power to make ammonia, which could be handled and used much like propane.

Imagine, using the power of the wind and waves to create a new energy source almost literally out of thin air. Matt's imagined it, and he's working to make it real.

My administration is working with the Ocean Energy Institute, which is planning to build a pilot plant within the next two years.

And Maine is right in the middle of the action.

Our future doesn't solely depend on new technologies. Maine can also look to its forests to help provide for an independent future.

Just as our woodlands powered Maine's industrialization, they can contribute to new industries. Bio-fuels, like ethanol, and a new generation of boilers can turn wood into the energy and electricity we need for our industries and our homes.

Whether it's our ability to produce energy ourselves from sustainable resources or our strategic location between energy-rich Canada and the needs of southern New England, Maine is in a position to benefit.

I'm talking about new jobs, lower electricity rates and cleaner air and water.

It goes beyond turbines on a ridge or bio-mass boilers at paper mills. Our new energy future can reach into every home, bringing benefits that are felt throughout our economy.

Maine is a national leader in weatherization and conservation efforts. We know that any serious effort to reduce our dependency on oil starts with conservation.

It's where we get the biggest bang for the buck.

Two weeks ago, Maine awarded nearly \$9 million dollars in grants to companies around the State committed to reducing their energy consumption, which will leverage about \$81 million dollars in private investment.

Using estimates from the Department of Energy, that translates into more than 950 jobs.

But for Tex Tech Industries in Monmouth, the grants are a little more personal. The investment will pay for improvements that will save between 45 and 50 jobs that were slated to head offshore.

Those good jobs will be saved because energy improvements will help Tex Tech hold its costs in line with its competitors in the Far East.

Conservation means jobs.

And for those families at Tex Tech, it's the difference between hope and despair.

Our efforts aren't limited to just businesses.

We also have a new program for homeowners that can provide rebates of up to \$3,000 dollars for weatherization and heating upgrades.

That's money coming right back to families who make the investment to cut their energy bills.

It's available to anyone, regardless of income.

The program helps families determine how to be more energy efficient and make the improvements, and the results can cut energy bills by up to half.

Government can't solve every problem, but as the grants and rebate program show, it can give businesses and families the tools to find their own answers.

For as long as I can remember, people have talked about "Two Maines."

I've always rejected that notion. We are one people, united in the things that matter most.

But there is truth to the idea that we live in different communities, each with its own strengths and challenges.

We can't be satisfied with an economy that favors one region or one industry. We need statewide growth, building on the assets that make each part of Maine unique and strong.

That is the idea behind the Great Maine Forest Initiative.

I believe it's the key to a successful rural economy, and can find the right balance for tourists and sportsmen, energy and industry.

A group of dedicated and diverse people have been working since last summer to develop a pilot program for this initiative.

The idea is to create large scale conservation that maintains access for traditional uses;

It protects Maine's valuable forest resources from development;

And provides a stable source of wood, sustainably managed, for our forest products industries and our growing energy sector.

If we make wise choices, and keep our forests as forests, there are enough resources for everyone.

In the last seven years, Maine has conserved nearly 1.3 million acres of land, including completing Governor Baxter's vision for Baxter State Park.

We've done it through a State trusted program, Land for Maine's Future, with federal and private resources and, most importantly, with local support.

Environmentalists, private landowners, sportsmen and industry have bridged the gaps that in the past had kept them from working together.

This is the model the Great Maine Forest Initiative will build upon.

In February, we will present this innovative plan to the Obama Administration, where it will be considered as a national model of how conservation can be done in a new, cooperative way.

No initiative can be successful without the most important ingredient.

Our people.

If we want our economy to grow, then our people need the tools to succeed.

On February 9th, I will be holding a Jobs Summit at the Augusta Civic Center.

This is a cooperative event between the Maine Chamber of Commerce, Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Labor.

We'll listen to people who are growing their businesses in this tough economy and take away the lessons they can share.

We want to put people to work today.

We're also going to make sure that Maine businesses are aware of the tax incentive and business development programs that are available.

For example, Maine's Pine Tree Zone program was expanded statewide last spring. The program is an important tool for companies that create new jobs or relocate here.

For 2009, Maine received 65 applications for the program, more than any other year since it was introduced and despite the recession. Of those, 27 came from York and Cumberland counties, which were just made Pine Tree Zone eligible.

These companies are creating jobs right now. And that's good news.

Also at the summit, I want to introduce my proposed new structure for the Department of Economic and Community Development.

Our economic development efforts are going to be more locally and regionally based, growing from the ground up and not from Augusta down.

This new approach will build on local assets and will be more friendly to businesses looking for assistance.

Over the long-term, jobs creation depends upon having a quality workforce.

And that starts with a quality education.

Despite mounting financial pressures, Maine continues to demonstrate that our children are our highest priority.

Education spending accounts for half of every dollar spent by State government.

I want to do more, but a good education depends upon more than just money.

My administration has made it a focus to reduce administrative costs for education, so resources can be directed to the classroom where they matter the most. And in those districts that have reorganized, there are real savings.

We have never sacrificed quality to save money. And we won't start now.

The voters this fall validated our approach to reducing unnecessary school district administration.

And I will not support changes that undermine the law. We must move forward, not back.

But I also recognize administrative reform can take you only so far.

We are at a crossroads in education. We must make changes.

President Obama has set aside significant incentive dollars as part of a national Race to the Top competition. For states to be eligible for the increased funding, they must answer some difficult questions.

Beginning with accountability.

Teachers and principals are responsible for their classrooms and the students in them. Student achievement must be part of how they are evaluated.

There are many factors that contribute to student performance, some of them outside the control of hardworking teachers. But we know that effective teachers get better results.

It's time we put that common sense into policy.

I know this proposal will be controversial in some quarters. But no less an authority than Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, acknowledges that student performance must be part of teacher evaluations.

How can we, in good faith, hand out grades to students based on how they perform if we fail to do the same thing for the people teaching them?

Recognizing good teachers is an overdue reform.

Next, we need to provide schools with the flexibility to succeed.

Under my plan, schools will be encouraged to innovate.

They will be able to manage their budgets on the school-level, set their own schedules, and try creative approaches to curriculum and instruction.

For example, we could see schools try a year-round schedule with a science-based theme that runs through the curriculum.

And we must address low-performing schools and reduce dropout rates.

We can do it by empowering parents and districts, and encouraging programs like Jobs for Maine's Graduates that we know are effective in keeping kids in school and preparing them for a career or college.

It's not enough to have good schools if too many of our kids don't go to them.

We will also adopt national standards for performance.

Maine already has rigorous standards, but because most states use different ones, comparisons are difficult.

By adopting core national benchmarks, we will be able to better understand the places where Maine excels and the areas where we need more work.

Look around and the world is a much different place than when I was in school.

The challenges are greater, and they require a focus on science, technology, engineering and math – or STEM for short.

Schools are partnering with businesses to create STEM-related internships, to engage students and introduce them to a world of possibilities.

Later this month, we'll hold our STEM Summit, where Maine's leading high-tech industries and thinkers will come together.

Companies will locate to places like Maine with a highly skilled workforce.

Attention to early childhood education is also critical for laying the foundation for success in life.

Even during these difficult times, we know that we have to invest in early childhood education.

Last year, working with the Legislature, we created New England's first and only Educare site, a public-private partnership that will help improve early childhood education in every part of the State.

Educare wouldn't have happened without the vision and determination of the First Lady.

She is a dedicated educator and advocate for children and families.

She is here tonight with our son, Jack. Would you both please stand and receive the greetings of the chamber?

Thank you.

Maine is blessed with an active and committed people, determined to make our State better.

We see it everyday in big ways and small, whether its donations to churches, relief efforts and spaghetti fundraisers, or big gifts to support our soldiers or our students.

And we see it from individuals like Stephen and Tabitha King or the Alfond Foundation, who continually contribute to worthy causes, and from groups like State workers, who contributed more than \$340,000 to their communities through our coordinated campaign.

Tonight, I would like to recognize Richard Collins, who is here with us.

Dick and his wife, Anne, have contributed \$6 million dollars to support the University of Maine, providing one of the largest gifts in the school's history.

It's an example of how the people of Maine support their communities and partner with government on issues that matter.

Dick grew up on a Maine potato farm and despite great success never forgot about his alma mater or his State. His contribution will help thousands of students and Maine's flagship university.

Dick, would you please stand and receive the greetings of the assembly.

Thank you.

There's a temptation to look around and see our challenges and feel like the terms of our economy are being dictated by others:

Financiers.

Wall Street.

Oil companies.

They've all certainly taken their toll.

But come June, Maine voters will have a chance to take control and make a real and lasting difference in our economy.

No, I'm not talking about the 23 – or more – people who are running so they can give this speech next year. Although that's important too.

I'm talking about an investment package and tax cut that will appear on the ballot.

Maine has an opportunity to invest in economic development and innovation, green energy, clean drinking water, higher education and the redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station.

About \$69 million dollars in bonds will go to voters in June.

I understand that during a recession, voters might be reluctant to approve new borrowing.

But the truth is, we can't afford not to make these investments.

They will put people to work, make our universities and colleges stronger, and help our critical Midcoast economy weather the storm of the air station's closing.

This is an investment in our people and our future. It's strategic and timely.

We must make it.

Also on the ballot in June will be a question opposing an income tax cut.

Last spring, we passed legislation that cuts income taxes in Maine. The Wall Street Journal editorial page called it the "Maine Miracle."

We lowered the rate from 8.5 percent, one of the highest in the country, to 6.5 percent for people making \$250,000 or less.

We did it by closing loopholes in the sales tax and by increasing the tax on meals and lodging to spread the burden onto visitors who come to Maine but who don't pay taxes here.

Maine Revenue Service says 90 percent of Maine families will benefit and more of our tax burden will be exported to tourists.

After all, when you and your family plan a vacation, you don't check to see how much the lodging tax is before you go.

This is a middle-class tax break that rewards work.

If you earn a paycheck, you'll be able to keep more of your wages.

And the lower income tax burden will attract new investors to Maine, where they can create needed private-sector jobs.

In June, I urge you to vote NO on this misguided effort to raise the personal income tax again.

Working families and small businesses deserve a tax break, and Maine needs new jobs now.

In Washington, there's a loud debate centered on health care.

The policy choices are far from clear cut, but the States are struggling, and we need relief both in terms of increased financial support and better policies so that everyone has access to affordable and high quality care.

It's a big issue and it touches every family and business in Maine.

Reform is difficult work. We know because Maine has been a leader, enacting the first comprehensive health reform effort in the country.

While we know we need a national solution, we will continue on our path of increasing access, quality and reducing costs.

Tonight I'm announcing another part of that effort.

Each one of us can help lower health care costs by taking better care of ourselves and taking responsibility.

As a doctor once told me: We can't show up at the emergency room and pretend we had nothing to do with getting there.

Tomorrow, a new resource will be available to help Mainers take control of their own health.

It's not health care reform from Washington or Augusta, but better health in the hands of the individual.

By logging on to "KeepMEWell.org," people can sign up and learn more about their health status and lower their risk for disease.

The confidential Web site will connect people to information and resources they need to be healthier and lower their health care expenses.

It will connect them to low-cost health services and community resources built through our sustained commitment to using tobacco settlement money for improved health and the Healthy Maine Partnerships that are located throughout Maine.

We need systematic improvements in health care. But we also have an obligation as individuals to take responsibility.

No matter the challenges we face as individuals or as a State, the people of Maine are always willing to help others even when money is short at home.

As we work to balance a difficult budget and to set Maine on the course for a prosperous future, I keep coming back to how lucky we really are to live in such a wonderful place.

Last week, the tiny island nation of Haiti was devastated by an earthquake.

The capital was destroyed, and it's hard to imagine the scale of the destruction and the terrible loss of life.

A country and its people precariously cling to life.

Mainers are already answering the call.

They rushed into chaos to provide aid and comfort, and to tell the stories of life and death.

Our State stands ready to do its part to help Haiti.

Soon, 324 members of the Maine Army National Guard will deploy to Afghanistan.

Whether it's at home during a disaster, or overseas in the fight against Al Qaida or delivering humanitarian assistance to a battered neighbor, Maine's National Guard is ready.

Every time I meet these men and women, I am overwhelmed with pride. They are among our best, they do us proud and they keep us safe.

The Herald tonight is Lieutenant Colonel Diane Dunn.

Colonel Dunn recently returned from Afghanistan, where she led a team of 81 National Guard soldiers. She is the first woman to lead a Maine National Guard battalion in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

The unit performed its mission with professionalism and courage.

Colonel Dunn please stand and accept the appreciation of the assembly for a job well-done and for bringing our soldiers home safely.

Thank you.

Tonight, I make this promise to the people of Maine.

We will not relent.

We will drive forward regardless of the obstacles that confront us.

We will sacrifice today, and we will make strategic investments for tomorrow.

We face hurdles and hardships, but we are not afraid to make decisions, to break new ground and to build. To set the bar high. To challenge old and outdated limits.

We are called to act prudently and responsibly. But we are called to act.

This is not an easy time.

But we are not adrift. We are grounded in the Maine values of hard work and integrity, and by a spirit of determination.

We are not trying to just get by. We are making changes so that Maine can be at the forefront of recovery and a new economy.

Our State is small enough where you know everyone, but big enough to get the right things done.

We have the power, the ability, the skills, the resources and the people.

On January 4th, 1972, Sen. Edmund Muskie came home to Maine to announce that he would run for President.

That night, he said:

"There is not a single problem we do not have the resources to solve if we overcome our fears and quiet our doubts and renew our search for the common good."

"Ultimately, of course, what is at stake is your future. I am not telling you that I can guarantee the best of all possible worlds. All I am asking is that we pledge a new beginning."

Tonight I say to you, the future is ours to make.

God bless you. God bless Maine and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

Governor Demonstrates New Free Tool to Help Mainers Improve Their Health

January 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today demonstrated the new Web-based tool designed to empower Maine people to improve their health. Keep ME Well will help Mainers learn more about their health status and take action to lower their risk for disease. The Governor announced the initiative last week in his State of the State address.

Keep ME Well is the Governor's universal wellness initiative – enacted last year by the Maine Legislature – aimed at helping Maine reach its goal of becoming the healthiest state in the nation.

"Free, voluntary and confidential, Keep ME Well will help Maine people be as healthy as they can be," said the Governor. "KeepMEWell.org is an important new tool that gives people information and resources so that they can gain more control over their lives and avoid those high and preventable costs that drive up premiums and fill our emergency departments."

A Keep ME Well personal report is created based on answers to a series of questions about a person's health history and habits. Completing the survey generally takes less than 15 minutes. The tool provides links to free and low-cost health services and local community resources that can help people improve their health.

The universal wellness program is an important next step in extending Maine's public health system, which has been streamlined and coordinated under the Baldacci Administration. The transformation of Maine's public health system is an important part of improving health care access under Dirigo Health Reform.

"Maine's public health system is serving Maine people by connecting them to the resources in their communities and by coordinating health care so it is delivered better," said the Governor. "A statewide system of comprehensive community health coalitions now exists that maximizes resources and stretches critical funding to meet the benefit of all Mainers. We've consolidated more than 100 grants and contracts that did not provide statewide coverage, to 28 statewide Healthy Maine Partnerships that does."

Maine's public health system, including local Healthy Maine Partnerships and 2-1-1 Maine, has been working in communities to create self-management tools that can help individuals with a chronic condition monitor their health and make changes to maintain their quality of life. Part of this self-management tool includes community supports, such as exercise options and healthy eating workshops, and programs such as Living Well.

"KeepMEWell.org is a convenient way for people in our community to improve their well-being," said Connie Putman of the Knox County Community Health Coalition, a Healthy Maine Partnership. "I

encourage everyone to take the time to complete the survey and gain an understanding of how to lower your risk for disease and improve your health.”

Governor Baldacci recognized early partners that are helping to get the word out about Keep ME Well. He applauded Hannaford Supermarkets, the first to join and promote Keep ME Well. Hannaford will highlight the service through their Employee Wellness program for employees and through pharmacies for the public. Additionally, the Maine State Library will be partnering with libraries across the state to assure access to Mainers who do not have computers.

The tool can be found at: www.KeepMEWell.org

Governor Celebrates \$35 million Grant to Expand Passenger Rail in Maine

January 28, 2010

Recovery Act Dollars Are Put to Work Creating Jobs and Economic Development

AUGUSTA – Governor Baldacci today applauded the announcement by President Obama that Maine had received a \$35 million grant to extend passenger rail service from Portland north to Freeport and Brunswick.

“This critical investment would not have been possible without the Recovery Act and the tireless advocacy of Sen. Olympia Snowe, Sen. Susan Collins, Rep. Chellie Pingree and Rep. Mike Michaud,” Governor Baldacci said. “This project will create jobs now, better connect our communities, boost economic development and growth, and reduce traffic and pollution on our highways.”

The grant is part of an \$8 billion program to enhance rail service around the country. According to the White House, the Northeast will receive nearly \$1.2 billion in grants that will help to lay new track and upgrade existing lines.

In Maine, more than 28 miles of track will be replaced, 30,000 ties laid and 36 crossings improved.

“The Downeaster is one of Amtrak’s most successful lines and is a national model for the successful introduction of new intercity passenger rail service,” Governor Baldacci said. “By extending service to Freeport and Brunswick, more travelers will be connected to a national rail network, which will spur business growth and increase tourism.”

“The investment is especially important as we work to redevelop Brunswick Naval Air Station, and will benefit the entire Midcoast region and State,” Governor Baldacci said.

In addition, the improvements are a necessary step to extending rail service toward Lewiston-Auburn and will improve freight rail service in the State.

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority will manage the expansion project.

The Governor has spoken to President Obama, Vice President Biden and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood about the importance of improved rail service in Northern New England.

“We would not be celebrating today without the efforts of countless people, including the President and Vice President, our representatives in Washington, the Maine Legislature, TrainRiders/Northeast, and the business and community leaders who have had the vision to believe in passenger rail,” Governor Baldacci said.

Maine Department of Corrections' Facility "Going Greener" With New Biomass Thermal Heating System

January 28, 2010

Mountain View Youth Development Center Will Be Among First In The Nation to Heat with Wood Pellets

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci and State Department of Corrections (DOC) Commissioner Martin Magnusson announced today that that department has partnered with International WoodFuels (www.iwoodfuels.com), a Portland based thermal energy provider, to install a state-of-the-art metered wood pellet heating system at the Mountain View Youth Development Center in Charleston. The center will be among the first corrections facilities in the nation to utilize metered heat from locally sourced wood pellets. The State is estimating that the installation of the new wood pellet boiler will eliminate the center's use of approximately 145,000 gallons of heating oil annually, further reducing the department's overall consumption of heating fuel by 20 percent.

"My administration has made it a top priority to find new and innovative ways to reduce the reliance that State-owned facilities have on foreign energy sources," stated Governor Baldacci. "The Department of Corrections has made great progress in meeting its commitments to reduce its fossil fuel consumption with a variety of sustainable energy initiatives. The introduction of a thermal heating system that relies on locally grown wood pellets at the Mountain View Youth Development Center is a great example."

The secure juvenile center, located in Charleston, will begin utilizing the WoodFuels' program later this year, which includes the engineering, construction, operation and maintenance of a highly efficient industrial wood pellet boiler and storage silo, all at no cost to the state. The company, along with center staff, will monitor the system in real time via the web and pellets will be delivered as needed by WoodFuels. Unique to the company's business model, the Department of Corrections is not required to pre-buy pellet supply from WoodFuels, but rather receives a monthly invoice for the metered BTU's that the system consumes to heat the facility. The price per BTU is negotiated annually and is determined by calculating specific economic factors.

The department, in partnership with the State's Bureau of General Services, entered into a 10-year energy service agreement (ESA) with WoodFuels following a competitive proposal process that guaranteed that the center will save the State thousands of dollars over heating with its current fuel source. The center is required to use the system as its main source of heat for the life of the contract.

The public/private partnership was made possible due to the approval of a new law by the Maine State Legislature and Governor Baldacci allowing State agencies through the Bureau of General Services to enter long term energy generation/co-generation ESA's for the purpose of increasing energy conservation, independence and security. This measure has put the Department of Corrections, and all State departments, in a stronger position to decrease their yearly fuel and energy expenses that are paid for with citizen's tax dollars.

"Improved energy efficiency and security is a priority throughout State government and for the Department of Corrections," Commissioner Martin Magnusson said. "It's critical that we aggressively manage our energy costs particularly during these difficult financial times."

Statewide, the Center's transition from fossil fuels to wood pellets will reduce consumption of #2 heating oil at State-owned facilities of the executive branch by approximately 5 percent each year, adding to the hundreds of thousands of gallons of heating fuel that Maine has already slashed at other State-owned facilities. The system is expected to also remove nearly 1,609 tons of carbon emission each year, equivalent to removing 266 cars from the State's roads.

WoodFuels, which owns and operates its own pellet manufacturing facilities including one currently being constructed in Burnham, will remove the department's need to monitor fluctuating fossil fuel prices that have stretched State agencies' budgets in recent years. The company only produces pellets for their metered heat customers, ensuring adequate supply during the extended Maine heating season.

"WoodFuels metered thermal energy program will supply heat to the Mountain View Youth Development Center with a guaranteed supply of clean, carbon neutral wood pellets that are harvested and produced right here from Maine's abundant wood supply," said Steve J. Mueller, President of WoodFuels. "Our partnership will not only reduce the use of fossil fuels in the State, which is a mission of WoodFuels, but will create and support jobs within the forestry and biomass industry across Maine."

In addition to the new wood pellet thermal heating system, the Executive Branch facilities of State government are heating with other renewable and alternative energy sources including cord wood (biomass), natural gas and geothermal energy. All electricity consumed by the Department of Corrections, as well as at all State-owned facilities, is from 100 percent renewable sources through the purchase of Maine-based renewable energy credits.

The State has also undertaken a variety of ongoing and incremental efforts - such as improved or reduced lighting, weatherization, improved control and operation of building environmental systems, improved measurement of energy use and other conservation projects, all helping to reduce energy consumption.

The Mountain View Youth Development Center, located in Charleston, is a 133-bed, secure juvenile facility that detains male and female juvenile offenders and male committed offenders from 11 to 21 years of age, with the majority being 16-19 years old. The facility serves the northern, eastern and central regions of the State of Maine, to include fourteen counties: Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington.

Governor Announces Nominee to Board of Corrections

February 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced the appointment of Richard L. Hanley to the State Board of Corrections.

The State Board of Corrections was created in 2008 to determine the best use for state and county corrections facilities, approve county jail budgets and develop uniform policy and procedures for consistent system-wide pre-trial, revocation and re-entry practices.

Hanley, of Winthrop, is the Chief Operating Officer of Spring Harbor Hospital. He also serves as a Vice President of Maine Mental Health Partners. He worked for 18 years at the Augusta Mental Health Institute, including six years as Superintendent.

Hanley received his undergraduate degree from Bates College. He earned a Master's in Education from the University of Southern Maine and a Master's in Healthcare Administration from the University of Minnesota.

The seat to which Hanley is nominated was created last year by LD 478, "An Act to Ensure That the Membership of the State Board of Corrections Includes a Representative with Expertise in issues Regarding Mental Illness."

The nomination must be reviewed by the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety and confirmed by the Senate.

Thaxter Trafton Sworn in as Commissioner of Economic Development

February 5, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today swore in Thaxter Trafton as Commissioner of Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development. Trafton was confirmed by the Maine Senate on Jan. 28, 2010, and had been serving as Acting Commissioner since Nov. 16, 2009.

Trafton served as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development since 2006. Prior to that, Trafton was the Director of Business Development at the department from 2003 to 2006.

Trafton also has an extensive private sector background. Before returning to Maine in 2003, he was Chief Administrative Officer of the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum Authority, where he supervised operating agreements with Coliseum sports franchises including Major League Baseball's Oakland Athletics, the National Football League's Oakland Raiders and the National Basketball Association's Golden State Warriors.

Business Leaders Across the State Meet at Governor's Job Summit

February 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today convened the Governor's Job Summit, bringing together individuals representing 80 businesses from across the State. The purpose of the summit, co-hosted by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, was to discuss effective ways to increase job creation.

In his welcoming remarks, the Governor said that many of the participants have not only weathered the current deep economic recession, but in many cases have expanded. "You have shown amazing resilience in this severe recession," said the Governor. "We will be listening to you as job creators and capital investors for your insights on how you succeed in difficult times. While I know there are no easy answers to get people employed, I believe all of us in the public sector need to hear from you what works."

After hearing from Dana Connors, President of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, and Thaxter Trafton, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, participants broke into smaller sessions to discuss such topics as State support for job creation in business sectors; strategies that help businesses grow; how companies use existing State programs; and how existing State investments and initiatives can be changed to better meet the needs of Maine businesses.

Businesses' discussions highlighted a number of topics as keys to business success in Maine, including:

Energy efficiency;

A workforce educated for today's skilled jobs;

Simple access for businesses to economic development programs;

A clear process for obtaining permits;

Stability in State programs;

Access to capital;

Effective transportation within Maine and to markets beyond; Capitalizing on Maine's assets of people, place and natural resources; and

Marketing the Maine Brand widely.

The Governor said that the summit will help Maine tailor its efforts to help companies create jobs.

"Looking forward, it's important for you to know that today's summit is not a one-shot, one-day exercise, but needs to be a continuing dialogue," said the Governor. "We in State government will take what is learned today and continue working with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and

businesses to develop public policy and focus scarce public resources where they do the most good. We are in this together – we want your businesses to succeed and you want your communities to succeed. Together we can achieve great things.”

Governor Baldacci Nominates Three to Maine Courts

February 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated three people for appointment to the Maine courts.

David Soucy, of Fort Kent, is being nominated for appointment to the District Court. Soucy is currently an attorney in private practice. Before that, he served for three years as the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands at the Maine Department of Conservation. He is also a former Commissioner of the Maine Workers' Compensation Commission and former adjunct faculty at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. He is a graduate of Bowdoin College and Georgetown University Law Center.

"David Soucy will be a strong addition to Maine's District Court," Governor Baldacci said. "He has demonstrated a commitment to justice and has the temperament to be successful as a judge."

Judge Wayne Douglas, of Ocean Park, is being nominated for reappointment to the District Court. Douglas was first appointed in 2002. Prior to his appointment, he was the chief legal counsel for Governor Angus King. He also served as an associate commissioner of the Maine Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and was an attorney with Pierce Atwood.

Justice William Brodrick, of Moody, is being nominated for reappointment as Active Retired Superior Court Justice. Brodrick has served as a judge for 30 years, beginning on the District Court in 1980. Prior to his appointment, he was an attorney with Bourque & Brodrick, an assistant county attorney in York County and an assistant attorney general.

Eliza Townsend Nominated to Head Department of Conservation

February 11, 2010

Two Nominated to Harness Racing Commission

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Elizabeth Townsend as Commissioner of the Department of Conservation. She currently serves as Acting Commissioner of the department.

“Eliza Townsend has been leading the Department with a critical eye to the balance of the stewardship of the State’s resources and the responsible use of those resources,” said Governor Baldacci. “She has a distinguished career working on issues related to the environment, conservation, budget and policy, and department management.”

Townsend has been serving as Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation since Jan. 4, 2010. She had served as Deputy Commissioner of the department from 2007 to Jan. 4. Prior to joining the department, Townsend was Executive Director of the Maine League of Conservation Voters and the Maine Conservation Voters Education Fund (2000 – 2007).

She served four terms in the Maine State House of Representatives (1992 – 2000). For six years, Townsend was a member of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, serving two years as House Chair.

Townsend earned a B.A. from McGill University and a masters from Carnegie-Mellon University. She lives in Portland.

The Commissioner of the Department of Conservation is charged with directing the management, development and protection of some of Maine's most special places, including 17 million acres of forest land, 10.4 million acres of unorganized territory, 47 parks and historic sites and more than 480,000 acres of public reserved land. Townsend’s nomination must be approved by the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee, and confirmed by the Senate.

In addition to this posting, the Governor also submitted two people for consideration for the Maine Harness Racing Commission.

Barbara Dresser is a new nomination for the Commission, and Stan Kuklinski is being nominated for reappointment by the Governor.

Dresser, a resident of Saco, is an attorney at Smith Elliott Smith & Garmey, P.A. in Saco. She has been involved with harness racing for 20 years. Dresser is a graduate of Lyndon State College in Vermont and earned a J.D. from the University of Maine Law School.

Kuklinski, of Farmington, has served on the Commission since April, 2004.

These nominees must be approved by the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee, and confirmed by the Senate.

Dale McCormick Sworn in as MaineHousing Director

February 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today swore in Dale McCormick as Director of MaineHousing. The Governor had nominated McCormick for reappointment on Jan. 5, and she was confirmed by the full Senate on Feb. 4.

“Dale has demonstrated great leadership and commitment to the State,” said Governor Baldacci. “She has worked tirelessly to help Maine families become homeowners and has been a critical member of my team working on energy efficiency and weatherization.”

McCormick has served five years as Director of MaineHousing. Prior to that, McCormick served eight years as Maine State Treasurer, the first woman to have held this high position in the State. McCormick also served in the State Senate for three terms. She currently resides in Augusta.

State Agencies Closed Monday and Tuesday

February 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today reminded the public that Maine State government offices are closed for the President's Day holiday on Monday, Feb. 15.

In addition, many Maine State government offices are closed on Tuesday, Feb. 16, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

"Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days," said Governor Baldacci. "When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities."

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part SSS:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the seventh of 10 closure days between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2010. The other dates that State agencies and offices will be closed are as follows:

Friday, March 12, 2010

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Friday, May 28, 2010

Maine Receives Critical Funding to Expand Health Workforce and Technology

February 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned that the State of Maine will receive \$11.5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) funds to promote quality of health care through technology and to develop the State's health care workforce.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that Maine will receive \$6.5 million in federal funds to develop and implement a statewide health information technology plan.

"This important federal funding is a critical step in national health reform," said Governor Baldacci. "Investing in our health technology lays the foundation for a more efficient and effective health care system that serves patients better and at less cost. I am pleased that our federal partners have recognized Maine's work to address access, quality and affordability of health care."

The Recovery Act funding allows the expansion of Maine's health information exchange, HealthInfoNet, to eventually reach all healthcare providers in the State. In addition, the funds will be used to provide coordination and oversight of this important initiative. The Federal government requires states receiving funds to establish an Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology. The responsibilities of the new entity are to:

- Insure the protection and privacy of health information records;
- Coordinate with MaineCare on a health information technology plan designed to meet the needs of people receiving the MaineCare benefit;
- Coordinate with ConnectMe on Maine's broadband project to bring fiber optic cable and expanded system capacity across the state;
- Collaborate with leadership of Maine's healthcare system to realize the full potential of health information technology by supporting plans to achieve meaningful use of the technology;
- Explore opportunities with Maine's education system to develop training and degree programs leading to job opportunities in health information technology; and
- Develop sustainability plans to assure the long term stability of a health information exchange infrastructure.

The State coordinator will be housed in the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance and will chair a Steering Committee already established by the Office to coordinate Maine's health information strategy.

“Health information technology coupled with transformations in the delivery of healthcare hold significant promise to increase quality of care while reducing costs,” said Governor Baldacci. “Maine has been in the forefront of health information exchange. Through the work of HealthInfoNet, more than half of Maine’s population benefits from electronic record availability at their point of care. With this funding we intend to reach the whole population in the State.”

In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor announced today that the State of Maine will receive \$4.9 million to expand opportunities for Maine’s health care workforce. The funds will support activities identified as critical to accelerate credentialing and employment in high-demand health care occupations. The Maine Department of Labor estimates that 400 Mainers will achieve credentialing through this program.

Governor Mourns Passing of Eva Price

February 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of Eva Price, a Bangor resident who at 101, was believed to be the oldest living Army nurse in Maine.

“Eva’s dedication to the field of nursing and to her nation in war and in peace has strengthened the fabric of this great country,” said the Governor. “From serving as a nurse in the United States Army during World War II and the Korean War, to caring for soldiers at Walter Reed Hospital, she showed the leadership and skill that has made a difference in countless lives and has supported this great nation in some of our greatest hours of need.”

The Governor had met Eva Price in November 2009 at an event recognizing her service in World War II. He presented her with a letter of commendation.

Maine Awarded \$14 Million to Support Critical Ports

February 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned that the State of Maine will receive \$14 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) funds to revitalize Maine ports.

Released as Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants, the \$14 million will support Maine's "Three-Port Strategy," which includes the Port of Portland, Port of Searsport and Port of Eastport.

"These grants will enable Maine ports to make vital improvements that will help Maine businesses be more competitive," said Governor Baldacci. "I am pleased that Maine is receiving this vital support for our transportation infrastructure from the federal government."

Maine will use the funds to diversify Maine ports' customer base and improve the ability to handle green technology, such as wind turbine components.

The funds break down as follows:

- \$5 million to the International Marine Terminal in Portland for capacity and infrastructure improvements. The funding will help improve access to the pier and also improve cargo-handling capability.
- \$7 million to Searsport for investments in innovative new equipment, including a heavy-lift mobile harbor crane and cargo-handling equipment.
- \$2 million will go to Eastport for a warehouse, conveyer equipment and storage pad.

"Maine's port strategy project will dramatically improve Maine's economic competitiveness while creating jobs and business activity for those living in the economically stressed areas of coastal Maine," said the Governor. "I want to thank Maine's Congressional delegation for their valuable support, which was critical in obtaining this grant."

The Governor also noted that today marks the one year anniversary of the signing of the federal Recovery Act.

"The Recovery Act provided critical support to Maine and other states that has enabled us to weather the most severe economic recession since the Great Depression," said Governor Baldacci. "In Transportation highway and bridge funding alone, Maine has been able to fund 75 projects, totaling \$141 million."

Governor's Statement on Canning Facility Closure in Prospect Harbor

February 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement in regards to the closing of Bumble Bee Foods Prospect Harbor sardine canning facility.

“Bumble Bee Foods has been a good corporate partner in Prospect Harbor,” Governor Baldacci said. “I know that the decision to close the plant was a difficult one for the company and for the community.”

The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and the Maine Department of Labor will work with Bumble Bee Foods, Prospect Harbor and the affected workers.

“Our top priority is to work with the workers to help them transition to a new job,” Governor Baldacci said. “But we will also actively pursue new uses for the facility and redevelopment.”

“This is a tough day for Prospect Harbor. During the next two months, we will do everything we can to put people back to work and find a new use for the plant,” Governor Baldacci said.

According to Bumble Bee Foods, the plant will cease operations in April.

Governor Celebrates 100 Years of Boy Scouts of America

February 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today recognized Boy Scouts from the Pine Tree Council and the Katahdin Area Council at a State House celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Boy Scouts of America. The Governor issued a proclamation declaring the month of February 2010 as Scouting Anniversary Month.

“Our State’s reputation as a place where citizens are involved and concerned about their neighbors is one that others envy. That good fortune needs to be nurtured,” said Governor Baldacci. “Respecting others and giving back to the community is not only what it means to be a Mainer, but it’s the Scouting tradition.”

“The work of the Boy Scouts of America fosters this connection of young people to their community,” said the Governor. “Through the Boy Scouts, youth gain a better understanding of the world around them and develop experiences that will last a life-time. Boy Scouts exemplify the true spirit of our communities and what it means to live in our great State.”

The Governor’s proclamation recognizing the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America follows.

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America has been at the forefront of instilling the timeless values of leadership, achievement, community service, character, and environmental stewardship in youth since its founding in 1910; and

WHEREAS, this national youth movement has made serving others through its values-based program its mission; and

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America is committed to helping millions of youth succeed by providing the support, friendship, and mentoring necessary to live a happy and fulfilling life; and

WHEREAS, the Katahdin Area and the Pine Tree Councils of the Boy Scouts of America and their Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, and Venturing crews are celebrating Scouting’s 100th anniversary with the theme “Celebrating the Adventure, Continuing the Journey”; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 525 community organizations that make Scouting available for more than 14,000 youth members in our State who participate in the Scouting program as a means of character building, citizenship training, and personal fitness,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim February, 2010 as

Scouting Anniversary Month

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Governor Baldacci Meets with Secretary Salazar and Atlantic Coast Governors

February 19, 2010

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Governor John E. Baldacci this afternoon met with United States Interior Department Secretary Ken Salazar and a number of other governors representing East Coast states to discuss U.S. strategy on offshore wind power development.

The meeting with the leaders of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf states and Secretary Salazar signified a proactive first step in forming an Atlantic Wind Consortium that will ensure cooperation of the states and the federal government to speed up permitting of off-shore wind facilities. Planning, siting and permitting of offshore wind will also provide lessons for transmission issues. The Secretary credited the governors in attendance for being in the forefront of the efforts to harness offshore wind to achieve in energy independence.

"I appreciate the energy and enthusiasm that Secretary Salazar has brought to bear to realize the great potential to create jobs and clean energy through a focused approach to offshore wind development," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine has strong potential to become a national leader in offshore wind development and the federal support for our efforts is critical, especially in regards to streamlining permitting."

Governor Baldacci credited the Obama Administration for its strong focus, financial support and attention to reducing regulatory burdens such as permitting for clean energy production. While a broad mix of renewable energy sources is necessary to provide secure energy supplies and jobs, Governor Baldacci told the Secretary that ocean wind should continue to receive attention and support from the federal government.

Maine is particularly well-placed to be a leader in offshore wind energy generation due to favorable geography, broad-based support including public-private partnerships and the technological and workforce strengths that the State has tirelessly built. Maine's deep ocean waters relatively close to shore, combined with our extensive maritime industry infrastructure and proximity to large northeastern regional energy markets, makes the Gulf of Maine the ideal location to lead vital deepwater offshore wind development efforts for the nation.

Maine has been recognized by the federal government for its leadership in offshore wind development. The University of Maine DeepCwind Deepwater Offshore Wind Consortium has been awarded \$25 million of federal support, including Federal Recovery Act funds, to expand efforts to develop offshore wind capacity.

In December, the Baldacci administration named demonstration sites for offshore wind technology located in Maine coastal waters, including the University of Maine testing site off Monhegan Island. The University has the goal for the first demonstration turbine to be operating in the water in 2011.

“Additional federal funding and a coordinated approach by federal agencies for siting of ocean wind and turbine projects are essential to facilitate ocean energy production in Maine,” said Governor Baldacci.

“Maine is eager to lead the way to a more stable and secure energy supply that is renewable and will create jobs here in this country. I’m proud of the aggressive steps we have taken in Maine to show what is possible. We must break the vice grip of the reliance on fossil fuels to heat our homes and run our vehicles to improve our long-term economic and national security.”

Governor Announces Nominations

February 22, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the Boards of Trustees of the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System.

Paul Mitchell and Victoria Murphy are being nominated for reappointment to the University of Maine System Board of Trustees. The Governor is nominating Samuel Collins, Michelle Hood and Benjamin Goodman to the University for new appointments to the System's Board of Trustees.

Mitchell of Waterville has been with the GHM Agency for 51 years. He has served one term on the Board of Trustees. Mitchell earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Maine and a master's in teaching from Columbia University.

Murphy of Portland is the co-owner of Pan Atlantic Consultants. She has served one term on the Board of Trustees. Murphy is a graduate of the University of Southern Maine.

Collins is a resident of Caribou and has worked at S.W. Collins Company for 29 years. He serves as a director of the University of Maine Presque Isle Foundation, MMG Insurance Company and the Aroostook Federal Savings & Loan Association. He served as co-chair of the Regional School Committee for school consolidation from 2007 to 2009 and is a past Caribou School Board chair. Collins is a graduate of Saint Lawrence University.

Hood, a resident of Bar Harbor, has served as President and CEO of Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems for four years. She has served on the Board of Visitors of the University of Maine. She also currently serves on the Governor's Council on Competitiveness and the Economy. Hood is a graduate of Purdue University and earned a master's degree from Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA.

Goodman of Kennebunk would serve as a student member of the Board of Trustees. He is a member of the 2012 (expected) class at the University of Maine. Goodman was appointed to serve on the Maine Legislative Youth Advisory Council from 2006 to 2008, serving as elected co-chair of the council in 2007.

To the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees, Governor Baldacci is nominating for reappointment Robert Clark, Dennis King and Cynthia Phinney. He is also nominating to the Board of Trustees Kenneth Hoeflick and Christopher McCormick.

Clark of Fort Fairfield has served as executive director of the Northern Maine Development Commission for the past 20 years. He also has served in municipal government for the City of Caribou and the Town of Fort Fairfield. He has served one term on the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees. Clark is a graduate of Northern Maine Community College and Husson University.

King is a resident of Freeport. He has served since 1998 as chief executive officer of Spring Harbor Hospital. Prior to that, he served as president and CEO of Acadia Hospital. He has been a Maine

Community College Trustee since 2003. King earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Maine.

Phinney, a resident of Livermore Falls, serves as business manager of IBEW Local 1837, where she has worked for 12 years. She is a current member of the Maine Citizen Trade Policy Commission. Phinney attended classes at the University of Maine Fort Kent and the University of Southern Maine.

Hoeflick is a resident of Standish. A current student at Southern Maine Community College, Hoeflick would serve as a student member of the Board of Trustees. He served nine years in the United States Air Force.

McCormick of Cumberland Foreside is president and CEO of L.L. Bean, where he has worked for 27 years. He is a graduate of Fairfield University and Harvard Business School.

The nominations must be reviewed by the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and confirmed by the Senate.

Governor Visits Workers in Prospect Harbor

February 23, 2010

Governor Visits Workers in Prospect Harbor

PROSPECT HARBOR - Governor John E. Baldacci today visited with workers and management of the Bumble Bee Foods sardine cannery in Prospect Harbor. The facility is slated to cease operations in April. The meeting coincided with the Maine Department of Labor's Rapid Response team session with Bumble Bee Foods workers.

After the meeting at the plant, the Governor met with town selectmen at the town office to discuss ways in which the State may be helpful in finding new uses for the facility that could put laid-off Bumble Bee employees back to work. Maine Department of Labor Commissioner Laura Fortman and Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Thaxter Trafton also attend the meetings to hear and discuss the concerns of the community.

"These workers and their families are deeply affected by the closure of this facility," said the Governor. "This will ripple throughout the community and region. I am here today to pledge my support and that of my administration to help the workers and to pursue new uses for the facility."

The State's Rapid Response team visit to the plant today is a critical first step in providing assistance to employees, such as providing help in filing for unemployment and connecting workers to the Maine Career Center services.

The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and the Maine Department of Labor will continue to work with Bumble Bee Foods, Prospect Harbor and the affected workers.

The Governor said that there has been preliminary interest expressed in potential use of the facility and that administration officials would meet with company officials to explore options for redevelopment and use of the facility.

Governor Directs State Agencies to Work Collaboratively with Native American Tribes

February 24, 2010

AUGUSTA – In a State House ceremony today with many of Maine's Native American Tribal leaders present, Governor John E. Baldacci today signed an Executive Order to encourage effective communications between the State of Maine and Maine Tribes.

"We know that we cannot truly succeed as a State unless all our people and all of our communities succeed," said Governor Baldacci. "We can accomplish great things when we work together collaboratively. This is true between State government and Tribal governments. That's why I am ordering all State agencies to promote positive and effective communications with Tribal governments."

The Executive Order the Governor signed ensures that Native American Tribes in Maine have meaningful and timely input into matters considered by the State that impacts them. While each State agency is ordered to designate a tribal liaison, State departments will determine how to ensure that the goals of this order are reached and maintained.

"Communications is a process. This Executive Order is important not only in its initial phase, but is designed to keep relationships between Maine State government and Tribal governments running smooth," said Governor Baldacci. "The issues that are important to our Tribes are important to the entire State. And the relationship between the State and the Tribes is a vibrant one. There are many opportunities before us, and I look forward to continuing our working relationship."

The Governor recognized the work of the Maine legislative leadership and especially Tribal Representatives in the Maine House: Representative Wayne Mitchell and Representative Donald Soctomah. He also thanked the leaders of the Maine Tribes: Victoria Higgins of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs; Brenda Commander of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians; William Nicholas of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township; Richard Doyle of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point; and Kirk Francis of the Penobscot Nation.

The text of the order follows.

February 24, 2010

AN ORDER TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE STATE OF MAINE AND THE NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES LOCATED WITHIN THE STATE OF MAINE

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has a unique legal relationship with Native American Tribes located within the state, including the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Aroostook Band of Micmacs, and the Houlton Band of Maliseets, as affirmed and set forth in state and federal law; and

WHEREAS, the State of Maine is committed to ensuring an effective social, economic and legal relationship between the Native American Tribes and the State; and

WHEREAS, it is vital to the well-being and prosperity of the State of Maine that the State maintain and continue to foster long-lasting and committed relationships with the Native American Tribes in Maine; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous unexplored opportunities and possibilities for the State and Tribes to pursue mutual programs and policies in a collaborative partnership to enhance and preserve natural resources for the betterment of communities and citizens in Maine;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order and direct that every state agency shall develop and implement a policy that:

- (1) promotes effective two-way communication between the state agency and Maine's Native American Tribes;
- (2) promotes positive government-to-government relations between the State of Maine and Maine's Native American Tribes;
- (3) enables Maine's Native American Tribes to provide meaningful and timely input into the development of legislation, rules and policies proposed by an agency on matters that significantly or uniquely affect those Tribes;
- (4) establishes a method for notifying employees of the state agency of the provisions of this Executive Order and the policy that the state agency adopts pursuant to this section; and
- (5) encourages similar communication efforts by the tribes.

I FURTHER DIRECT that every state agency shall designate a tribal liaison, who reports directly to the office of the head of the state agency, to:

- (A) assist the head of the state agency with developing and ensuring the implementation of the communication policy set forth above; and
- (B) serve as a contact person who shall maintain ongoing communication between the state agency and Maine's Native American Tribes.

Nothing in this order creates any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the State of Maine, its agencies, or any person. The effective date of this Executive Order is February 24, 2010.

(Signed)

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Governor Orders Flag Flown at Half-Staff in Hanover and Rumford on Feb. 27

February 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today ordered that flags be flown at half-staff on Saturday, Feb. 27, in the towns of Hanover and Rumford for Norman Ferguson Jr. Ferguson, a resident of Hanover, had served four terms as State Senator from the area.

Funeral services for Mr. Ferguson have been set for Saturday, Feb. 27, 2010.

Governor Recognizes Reed & Reed for Commitment to Workplace Safety

February 25, 2010

AUGUSTA - Maine Governor John E. Baldacci today recognized Reed & Reed, a Woolwich based general contracting firm, for its efforts in providing a safe and healthy work environment for employees. At a State House ceremony, the Governor joined Maine Department of Labor officials in certifying the company under the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

The certification covers work at Reed & Reed's project site at Kibby Township, where the company is the prime contractor for the largest wind power project in New England which includes erecting 44 wind turbines. It is the first SHARP certified wind power project in the nation.

"For more than 80 years, Reed & Reed has been a leader in construction contracting and engineering providing good jobs for Maine workers," said Governor Baldacci. "Today, Reed and Reed is a regional leader in wind power construction, and they have incorporated safety and injury prevention in every process of their work, leading to a 60 percent reduction in reportable injury rates."

"The SHARP Award is a tremendous honor for Reed & Reed and all of our employees. It recognizes the commitment our employees make to themselves and their co-workers," said Reed & Reed CEO, Jackson Parker. "And to be the first wind power project in the nation to earn SHARP status tells the world that companies from Maine can compete at every level."

"Reed & Reed is part of an elite group of Maine employers who have demonstrated high standards and industry leadership in creating a safe and healthy workplace for employees," said Laura Fortman, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor.

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) offers incentives to private sector employers that take a proactive approach to workplace safety. The SHARP certificate is granted to employers who have demonstrated exemplary achievements in workplace safety and health by receiving a comprehensive safety and health consultation visit, correcting all workplace safety and health hazards, adopting and implementing effective safety and health management systems, and agreeing to request further consultative visits if major changes in working conditions or processes occur that may introduce new hazards. Employers meeting these specific program requirements may be exempt from general scheduled Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspections for one year.

SafetyWorks! consultants worked with Reed & Reed to improve safety in all operational areas with a focus on injury prevention. Specific safety improvements involved developing of comprehensive safety training programs, scheduling site inspections and preparing job specific safety plans and hazard identification tools.

Reed & Reed, Inc is one of northern New England's largest and most versatile general contractors. Founded as a bridge building firm in 1928 by Captain Josiah W. Reed and his son Carlton Day Reed, the company has prospered under four generations of family leadership to build a long-standing reputation as one of Northern New England's top heavy contractors. In the last decade, the company has emerged as a regional leader in wind power construction, having built the first industrial wind power project in Maine in 2006, followed by the construction of numerous other large scale projects throughout New England in the years since. The Kibby project site underway now will be the largest wind power site in Maine producing 132 megawatts of clean, renewable power when it is finished.

SafetyWorks! is an outreach program of the Maine Department of Labor designed to reduce job-related injuries, illnesses and deaths. The program provided safety and health training to over 10,000 Maine workers last year and consultation services to hundreds of employers. SafetyWorks! services are voluntary and offered free of charge.

For more information about the SHARP program or any of the other free safety and health services offered by the Maine Department of Labor SafetyWorks! program, call (207) 623-7900 (TTY: 1-800-794-1110) or visit www.safetyworksmaine.com

Governor Baldacci Kicks-Off Census 2010 Partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau

February 26, 2010

Citizens encouraged to participate in 2010 Census

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced he is partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to achieve a complete and accurate count of the U.S. population in 2010. The announcement came during a Census 2010 kickoff event in the Hall of Flags at the State House. Participants included State Senators and Representatives, commissioners and department heads, local Census office staff, and members of Maine's Complete Count Committee.

"As Governor of Maine, I am dedicated to ensuring everyone understands the importance of participating in the 2010 Census," said Governor Baldacci. "The Census helps us to better understand what's happening in our State and is an important tool for good public policy."

The partnership will involve sharing important information about the Census in Maine and encouraging people to complete and mail back their 2010 Census forms. Every year, the federal government distributes more than \$400 billion to state, local and tribal governments based on Census data. Leaders use this data to guide planning decisions on where to build new roads, hospitals, child-care and senior centers, schools and more. Data also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"With the help of our 2010 Census partners, the Census Bureau has a far greater chance of reaching everyone in the United States, than if we were to attempt this monumental task alone," said Robert Groves, Director, U.S. Census Bureau. "Through their unique roles in their individual communities, elected officials can help deliver the 2010 Census message to every corner of the nation."

Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010; households should complete and mail back their forms upon receipt. Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take a count in person.

Information shared with the Census Bureau is completely confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.

For more information about the 2010 Census, visit <http://2010census.gov/>

Governor Mourns Passing of David Carpenter

February 26, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of former State Senator David Carpenter.

The Governor served with Carpenter in the Maine State Senate.

“David was a friend and a strong advocate for his community,” said Governor Baldacci. “I have called to express my sympathies to his wife, Nancy. David will be greatly missed.”

Governor Announces Nominations

March 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated individuals for appointment to the Boards of Directors of the Maine State Housing Authority, Maine Turnpike Authority, and the Maine School of Science and Math.

Mark Samson of Auburn is a new appointment to the Maine State Housing Authority. He has 23 years experience in the banking industry and is currently Vice President, Retail Banking Manager at Mechanics Savings Bank. He served in the 123rd Legislature and was a member of the Business, Research, and Economic Development Committee. Samson is a graduate of Lesley College.

John Dority of Augusta is being nominated for appointment to the Maine Turnpike Authority. He worked for 54 years at the Maine Department of Transportation, the last 13 of which as Chief Engineer. Dority will be the member representing Kennebec County. He is a graduate of the University of Maine.

Nominated for confirmed appointments on the Maine School of Science and Math Board are Dale Gordon (new appointment), Craig Kesselheim (new appointment) and Richard Oravetz (reappointment).

Gordon of Caribou has served as a family nurse practitioner at The Aroostook Medical Center for 15 years. She was recently elected to serve on the RSU #39 School Board and is past-president of the Maine School of Science and Math Parents' Association. She received her undergraduate degree from Smith College, a Master's in applied nursing from McGill University and received a certificate of advanced study from the University of Maine.

Kesselheim, a resident of Southwest Harbor, has served since 2004 as a senior consultant of Great Schools Partnership in Portland. Prior to that, he served as Director of Curriculum and Staff Development for MSU 98 on Mt. Desert Island. Kesselheim received his undergraduate degree from College of the Atlantic, a Master's from Bridgewater State College and a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Maine.

Oravetz of Holden is owner and operator of RAO & Associates, a consulting company providing financial and operational management services. Oravetz has been a Trustee of the Maine School of Science and Math since 2007. He is a graduate of California State University.

The Governor's nominations must be reviewed by the relevant Legislative committees and are subject to confirmation by the Senate.

Governor Baldacci to Receive Public Health Award from American Medical Association

March 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci is in Washington, D.C., tonight to receive a 2010 Dr. Nathan Davis Award for Outstanding Government Service from the American Medical Association (AMA). The award honors the Governor for his efforts to improve the health of Maine people.

“This prestigious award acknowledges the commitment of many dedicated Maine people who have worked to increase access to high quality health care for all citizens,” said Governor Baldacci. “We all are painfully aware that achieving health care reform is not an easy task, but by working together, Maine has achieved a great deal over the past seven years. We recognized that quality and affordable health care is vital to the stability of our families and businesses and it’s critical to the welfare of our nation.”

Governor Baldacci was nominated for the award by the Maine Medical Association. In the audience this evening will be Dr. Robert McAfee, former AMA President who recently retired from serving as Chair of the Dirigo Health Agency Board of Directors in Maine.

The Governor thanked the leadership and members of Maine Medical Association for working with his administration. He recognized Gordon Smith, Executive Vice President of the Maine Medical Association, for contributing as a member of many task forces and working groups to represent the valuable experience and knowledge of physicians during the crafting of health care reform.

The Governor also said integral to many health improvements initiated in Maine in recent years were members of the Maine Legislature, public health officials, advocates and Trish Riley, Director of the Governor’s Office of Health Policy and Finance.

Among achievements singled out by the Maine Medical Association in its nomination of the Governor for the AMA award are the use of Tobacco Settlement funds for health care purposes; utilizing technology to increase quality and reduce costs; redesigning the public health system in the State; establishing the infrastructure to put into action the State health plan; putting into place and achieving health care quality benchmarks; expanding communication of best practices in health care delivery; and establishing a universal wellness initiative to Maine people realize opportunities to improve their own health.

The Dirigo Health Reform legislation from which many health care initiatives began was the first statewide comprehensive health care overhaul effort achieved in decades. Dirigo passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in 2003, in the early days of Governor Baldacci’s first term.

The Governor said that the partnerships created and maintained were essential to achieving success in reforming health care.

“I appreciate the partnership Maine’s physicians and other health care providers have had with my administration to help develop comprehensive programs to improve public health and to address the

issues of access, cost and quality,” said the Governor. “In Maine, as elsewhere in this country, we have a long way to go. That’s why our commitment to work together is so important. Together we can find the way to improve people’s health and strengthen our nation.”

Governor Announces Nominations to Board of Education

March 2, 2010

Nominations also named for Loring Development Authority, State Civil Service Appeals Board and Marine Resources Advisory Council

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Dorothy Martin, Ph.D., and Angela Bechard to the State Board of Education.

Dorothy Martin, Ph.D., of Limestone is being nominated for appointment to the State Board of Education. Martin has more than 30 years experience in education and has served as Career Development Director for the past five years at the Loring Job Corps Center. She served four years as executive director of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics. Martin earned an undergraduate degree from Louisiana College, Master's and Doctor of Education degrees from Northwestern State University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi.

Angela Bechard, a resident of Monmouth, is also being nominated for appointment to the State Board of Education, filling a student member slot. She is a sophomore at Monmouth Academy.

The Governor also named the following nominations to other boards.

To the Loring Development Authority, the Governor has nominated for appointment Richard Ezzy of Caribou, David King of Limestone and Thomas Clowes of Stockholm. These are all new appointments.

To the State Civil Service Appeals Board, the Governor has nominated Tracy Bigney of Bangor for reappointment. He has also nominated for new appointments Jane Gilbert of Augusta, Rebecca Grant of Hallowell and Edward Gorham of Randolph.

To the Marine Resources Advisory Council, the Governor has nominated Sean Mahoney of Portland.

The Governor's nominations must be reviewed by the relevant Legislative committees and are subject to confirmation by the Senate.

Governor Recognizes American Red Cross

March 3, 2010

AUGUSTA – In a State House ceremony today, Governor John E. Baldacci presented a proclamation to Maine's American Red Cross chapters recognizing March as American Red Cross Month.

"Thank you for the work you do in our communities every day," said Governor Baldacci. "I saw firsthand the dedication and hard work of the Red Cross this past weekend after the latest storm to hit the State. You provide critical support to the State, county and local emergency agencies in times of need and are an invaluable resource to the people of Maine. Together, we are striving to make the great state of Maine safer and stronger for everyone."

The text of the Governor's proclamation follows.

WHEREAS, the American Red Cross fulfills a unique and vital role in our state, providing help and hope in the face of emergencies and disaster, and it a true reflection of the humanitarian and volunteer spirit of the American people; and

WHEREAS, for nearly 100 years Presidents have called on the American people to support the Red Cross and its humanitarian mission. In World War 1, President Woodrow Wilson ordered the Red Cross to raise funds to support emergency aid to the Military, as mandated by the Red Cross Congressional Charter. At that time, the American Red Cross set a goal of \$125 million and in less than six weeks donations totaled nearly \$146 million, a tribute to the overwhelming generosity of the American public; and

WHEREAS, in 1943, during World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt became the first president to proclaim March as Red Cross Month and called Americans to "rededicate themselves to the splendid aims and activities of the Red Cross". President Roosevelt's call to action nearly 70 years ago started a tradition of designating March as Red Cross Month, a time to recognize and support the valuable work of the American Red Cross by making a financial contribution, donating blood, taking a life-saving class, or volunteering to help the Red Cross perform its mission; and

WHEREAS, every day, through its network of employees and more than 600 volunteers the American Red Cross is there to save the day when disaster strikes or when a neighbor's house burns down; and

WHEREAS, our State depends on the American Red Cross and because it is not a government agency, the Red Cross depends on support from the public to continue its humanitarian work. This is especially important in these challenging economic times for the Red Cross and all Americans,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim the month of March, 2010 as

AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Governor Presents Changes to Proposed 2010-11 Budget

March 3, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today presented his priorities for restoring \$78.7 million in cuts originally proposed to close a budget gap created by the global recession and declining State revenues.

In December, the Governor presented a plan to close a gap of \$438 million in the current two-year State budget. Modestly improving revenues and increased federal support make it possible to mitigate the impact of some of the proposals.

On March 1, the Revenue Forecasting Committee upgraded Maine's two-year revenue picture by \$50.9 million. In addition, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has made an administrative change in the federal Medicaid program that increased resources to Maine by \$27.8 million.

"From the beginning, I have been committed to presenting a fiscally responsible plan to balance the State budget," Governor Baldacci said. "The slight improvement in the economy and the increased assistance from the federal government allow us to address legitimate concerns in human services and education while also making investments in Maine's long-term financial health."

The Governor's revisions:

- Restores \$37 million in health and human services, including increased support for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, disability services, mental health crisis intervention and home-based services. It also proposes alternative reductions of \$13 million and new initiatives of \$5.3 million.
- Restores \$20 million for K-12 education for FY 2011.
- Restores \$8 million for higher education for FY 2011 (\$6 million for the University of Maine System; \$1.7 million for Maine Community College System; and \$267,139 for Maine Maritime Academy).
- Restores \$6 million for municipal revenue sharing for FY 2010.
- Makes a \$3.5 million payment for retiree health.
- Eliminates an \$8.1 million payroll delay.
- Includes \$1.75 million to fully fund the State's obligation for disaster assistance.
- Includes \$2.6 million to pay for a \$79 million job creation bond package.

"I have placed a high priority on finding a bipartisan and cooperative path through these troubled economic times," Governor Baldacci said. "With these proposals, I believe we can give school districts and municipalities time to adjust to declining revenues, protect our core values and safeguard the State's economy."

During a press conference announcing the details of the change package, Governor Baldacci reiterated his commitment to balancing the State budget without raising taxes.

“There are still many hard decisions that must be made in this budget,” Governor Baldacci said. “But during this difficult economy, I will not support higher taxes. Maine families and businesses cannot afford a greater burden.”

Governor Baldacci also talked about the need to continue to make structural changes to better match spending with available resources in the future.

“I am also including a number of savings initiatives in this package that will reduce costs going forward, particularly in the Department of Health and Human Services,” Governor Baldacci said.

Those initiatives include increased efficiencies at Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center, standardized rates and reduced per member/per month costs in MaineCare.

In addition to the restorations, the proposal also includes funding for a targeted investment package, which will focus on job creation.

“We have an opportunity to put people back to work, to create jobs and grow our economy,” Governor Baldacci said.

Details of the Governor's investment proposal will be released next week.

For more information about the Governor's change package, visit <http://www.maine.gov/budget/budgetinfo/2010supplemental.htm>

Governor Ceremonially Signs Truck Weights Bill

March 3, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today held a ceremonial signing of LD 1736, “An Act To Improve Safety on Maine's Primary and Secondary Roads, Reduce Road Maintenance Costs and Improve the Environment and the Economy by Allowing Certain Heavy Commercial Vehicles on the Interstate Highway System in Maine.”

This new law enables the truck weigh limits on nearly 300 miles of Maine Interstate north of Augusta to be raised to the 100,000 pound limit during the one-year federal pilot. Until the change, this stretch of Interstate was limited to 80,000 pounds gross vehicle weight. Surrounding states and provinces had a near or above 100,000 pound limit.

“Raising the weight limit on the Interstate north of Augusta will enable Maine to increase safety on its roads, reduce pollution and puts the State on even footing regionally, aiding our ability to compete economically,” said Governor Baldacci. “This significant achievement would not be possible without the sustained support from Senator Susan Collins, Senator Olympia Snowe, Congressman Mike Michaud and Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, as well as the Maine Legislature, especially the Leadership, sponsors of this bill and the members of the Transportation Committee.”

The Governor’s bill was passed as emergency legislation by the Maine Legislature on Feb. 11 and signed into law by the Governor on Feb. 12. The legislation was possible following passage in December of a pilot program at the federal level. The one-year pilot, sponsored by Senator Collins, paved the way to raising the weigh limits on the Interstate System.

“This bill is essential for safety and for our economy,” said the Governor. “The State and Federal changes enable Maine to move heavy truck traffic off Maine’s secondary roads and onto the Interstate that was built to handle them.”

The Governor said heavy truck traffic in Maine towns was a risk to the public. According to national statistics, 82 percent of commercial vehicle fatalities occur on non-Interstate roads.

In addition, the change will have a positive impact on the environment. According to estimates provided to the Maine Department of Transportation, trucks traveling on the I-95 are 14-21 percent more fuel efficient than the same trucks on secondary roads.

Moving heavy traffic to the Interstate is also expected to reduce wear-and-tear on Maine’s secondary roads and reduce bridge and pavement repairs by as much as \$2 million per year.

The Governor and Transportation Department Commissioner David Cole said that they were hopeful that the pilot will be extended in the future.

Governor Announces Nominations to District Court, FAME

March 3, 2010

Also Announces Nominations to IF&W Advisory Council

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated two people for appointment to the Maine District Court. He also nominated seven to the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) Board, six of whom are new appointments. In addition, the Governor is nominating three to the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Advisory Council.

DISTRICT COURT

Peter L. Darwin of Portland has been in private practice since 1996. Before that, he was as staff attorney with Pine Tree Legal Assistance for 13 years. He received his law degree from the National Law Center at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and his undergraduate degree from the State University of New York at Binghamton.

E. Mary Kelly of Falmouth has been a Family Law Magistrate in the Maine District Court for four years. Before that, she was an Assistant Attorney General for 12 years. Kelly attended undergraduate and graduate school at the National University of Ireland and received special training from the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland to be a solicitor.

The nominations must be reviewed by the Legislature's Judiciary Committee and confirmed by the Maine State Senate.

FAME

The Governor is nominating Glenn Lamarr of Fort Kent for reappointment. Lamarr has served on the Board of FAME since 2006. He has been employed at TD Bank for 20 years and also serves on the Northern Maine Medical Center Board of Trustees. Lamarr is a graduate of Bates College.

New appointments to the FAME Board are: Reis Hagerman; Shepard Lee; Michael Mahoney; Rosaire Pelletier; John Sevigny; and Evelyn Silver.

Hagerman is a resident of Scarborough. He is the Vice President, Enrollment Management, at Saint Joseph's College. Hagerman has served two years as the Director of the Maine Education Assistance Division at the Finance Authority of Maine. He received an undergraduate degree from Saint Joseph's College and an MBA from Rivier College.

Lee of Cape Elizabeth is the Chairman of the Board of Lee Auto Malls and has been in the auto dealership business for 63 years. He has served on a number of local, state and national committees and organizations. Lee is a Bowdoin College graduate.

Mahoney, a resident of Cape Elizabeth, had originally been appointed to the FAME Board as an at-large member. The current nomination is to the attorney seat on the Board. Mahoney is a partner at the law

and government affairs firm of Federle Mahoney. He served for two years as the Chief Legal Counsel in the Governor's Office, and prior to that, had been a partner at Preti Flarerty. Mahoney earned his undergraduate degree from the College of the Holy Cross and his J.D. from Boston College Law School.

Pelletier of Madawaska currently serves as Governor Baldacci's senior forest products advisor. Prior to that, he worked for Fraser Papers for more than 40 years. He serves on the Maine State Chamber of Commerce Board. Pelletier obtained a number of professional degrees at the Cambridge School of Business.

Sevigny of Portland is Vice President and Treasurer of First Allied Realty Associates, where he has worked for 15 years. He has four decades of commercial real estate lending experience. Sevigny is a graduate of Bates College.

Silver is a resident of Bangor. She currently serves as Senior Advisory to the President of the University of Maine. She has been employed at the University for 14 years. Silver is active on local commissions and boards and also served on the Governor's Task Force on Postsecondary Education from 2004-2005. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Tufts University, a Master's from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.

These nominations must be reviewed by the Joint Standing Committee on Business, Research and Economic Development and is subject to confirmation by the Senate.

INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Governor is nominating for reappointment Michael Witte of New Harbor. Witte has served on the Advisory Council for three years. He is a deputy animal control officer for the towns of Bristol, Newcastle and Damariscotta.

Governor Baldacci is nominating for new appointment Alan Greenleaf of Old Town and Wade Kelly of Allagash.

Greenleaf is retired. Before that, he worked at the Georgia Pacific mill in Old Town for more than 33 years. He is a founder and current board member of the Maine Youth Fish and Game Association. He also serves on the Board of the Old Town-Orono YMCA.

Kelly has been a Master Maine Guide and has operated his own guide business for more than 20 years.

These nominations must be reviewed by the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and is subject to confirmation by the Senate.

Governor to Honor Two-Time Gold Medalist Seth Wescott

March 5, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci tomorrow will join supporters of Maine's Scott Wescott, who returned home this week after winning his second consecutive Olympic Gold Medal for snowboard cross. The Governor will be at the event at 1 p.m. at Sugarloaf USA. Wescott is from Farmington and trains at Sugarloaf.

"Seth has enormous talent and he represents the best of Maine," said Governor Baldacci. "He's an unassuming, down-to-earth, dedicated, hard-working guy who cares about his community. He's been a great role model for our young people, encouraging them to get outside, exercise and enjoy all that Maine outdoors has to offer. He and Joan Benoit-Samuelsen have really done a lot for our State in promoting physical fitness and the love of Maine - as have all our Olympic competitors."

The Governor will proclaim Saturday as Seth Wescott Day.

The text of the proclamation follows.

WHEREAS, Seth Wescott is the first Winter Olympics Gold Medal winner from the State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, Seth Wescott has lived in Farmington, graduated from Carabassett Valley Academy and trained at Sugarloaf USA, and continues to make Maine his home; and

WHEREAS, on the slopes and off, Seth Wescott exhibits the best of his Maine roots: hard-working, determination, perseverance and pride in his craft; and

WHEREAS, Seth Wescott has earned his reputation as the world's best snowboard cross competitor, having put snowboard cross on the map and inspired countless Americans and others with his mastery of the sport; and

WHEREAS, Seth Wescott won the first Olympic Gold Medal in snowboard cross in 2006 and repeated this incredible feat by winning gold in the 2010 Winter Olympics; and

WHEREAS, Seth Wescott takes care of his community and provides an outstanding role model for youth, especially in Maine where he works with organizations and the State to encourage young people to exercise and get outside to experience all that Maine has to offer and to find and grow their talent,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim March 6, 2010 as

Seth Wescott Day

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance and furthermore name Seth Wescott as an Official Ambassador for the State of Maine.

Governor Baldacci Encourages Maine Residents to Complete and Mail Back 2010 Census Forms

March 8, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today encouraged the people of Maine to complete and mail back the 2010 Census form in an effort to eclipse the State's Census 2000 mail participation rates. Maine has partnered with the Census Bureau to share important information about Census 2010 and encourage participation in the census.

"A complete and accurate count of the people in our community is critical for government to work effectively," said Governor Baldacci. "Please join me in taking 10 minutes to answer 10 questions that are vital to our future."

One of the shortest Census forms in U.S. Census history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Responses to the Census form should include everyone that will be living at that address as of Census Day, April 1, 2010, the official day of the population count. It is not necessary to wait until April 1, 2010, to return the Census form, however. Forms should be returned as soon as possible.

Mailing back a form ensures an accurate count and lowers the cost of the 2010 Census by reducing the number of Census workers who must go door-to-door to collect Census data. About \$85 million is saved for every one percent increase in mail participation. Also, the Census Bureau saves \$60-\$70 per Census form returned by mail.

Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) will be available to assist those unable to read or understand the Census form. For those with visual impairments, the Language Assistance Guide will be available in large print and Braille. Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons who do not have access to Video Relay Service (VRS) can call the TDD number, 1-866-783-2010. In addition to these options, Language Assistance Guides will be available in 59 languages at all QAC locations.

From March 22 through May 3, 2010, daily mail participation rate maps and data tables will be available at <http://2010census.gov/>

For more information, visit <http://2010census.gov/>

Governor Announces Nominations for Superintendents, Boards and Commissions

March 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced that he is nominating for reappointment Mila Kofman for Superintendent of the Bureau of Insurance, Lloyd LaFountain III for Superintendent of the Bureau of Financial Institutions and William Lund for Superintendent of the Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection.

Kofman, a resident of Augusta, has served as Superintendent of the Bureau of Insurance since 2008. Prior to that, she served as Associate Research Professor at the Georgetown University Health Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. She has led research projects at the Institute focused on public and private mechanisms to address the issue of the uninsured, health care fraud and other issues. From 1997 to 2001, Kofman was a regulator at the U.S. Department of Labor, where she specialized in developing guidance for state and federal health care reforms and initiatives. Kofman has a bachelor's degree in government and politics from the University of Maryland. She earned a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center.

LaFountain of Biddeford has served as Superintendent of the Bureau of Financial Institutions since 2005. LaFountain had been a partner in the Biddeford law firm of LaFountain & LaFountain. As a member of the Maine State Senate, he served for eight years (1996-2004) as Chair of the Insurance and Financial Services Committee and its predecessor, the Banking and Insurance Committee. From 1994-1996, he represented District 19 (Biddeford) in the Maine House of Representatives. LaFountain graduated from Suffolk University School of Law in 1987 and has a bachelor's degree from the College of Holy Cross.

Lund of Portland has served as Superintendent of the Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection for 22 years. Before that, he was an Assistant Attorney General (from 1983 to 1987). Lund is a graduate of Bowdoin College and earned his law degree from the University of Maine School of Law.

The nominations must be reviewed by the Legislature's Insurance and Financial Services Committee and confirmed by the Maine State Senate.

The Governor has also nominated for appointment individuals to the Board of Environmental Protection, the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission and Maine Maritime Academy Board of Trustees.

Board of Environmental Protection

The Governor is nominating two people for reappointment to the Board of Environmental Protection: M. Wing Goodale and Richard Gould.

Goodale resides in Falmouth. He has served on the Board since 2006. Goodale is the Deputy Director and Senior Scientist at the BioDiversity Research Institute, where he has been employed since 2001. He currently is a member of the Falmouth Shellfish Committee and a past member of the Falmouth

Conservation Commission. Goodale holds a bachelor's degree from Colorado College and a master's from the College of the Atlantic.

Gould is a resident of Greenville and has served on the Board for four years. He has worked for four years at the Maine Small Schools Coalition. Gould retired from teaching after 22 years and served five terms in the Maine House of Representatives (1986 to 1996), where he served on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee (serving one term as co-Chair). He is also active in municipal government. Gould received his undergraduate degree from Farmington State Teachers College and completed graduate work at the University of Maine.

These nominations must be reviewed by the Natural Resources Committee and confirmed by the Senate.

Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission

Governor Baldacci is nominating Paul Jacques for reappointment to the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission. He is also nominating for new appointments Cushman Anthony, Dr. H. Roy Partridge and Paul Thibeault.

Jacques of Waterville has been serving as Deputy Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for seven years. He is a former Kennebec County Commission Chair and was self-employed. Jacques served 18 years in the Maine State House of Representatives (1978 to 1996), serving as Majority Leader from 1994 to 1996.

Anthony resides in North Yarmouth and is a retired lawyer and mediator. He served in the Maine State House of Representatives from 1986 to 2002. Anthony is a former Chair of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission, having served in that capacity from 1999 to 2004. He holds a B.A. degree from Amherst College and a J.D. from Michigan Law School.

Partridge of Scarborough currently works at Bowdoin College, where he is the Special Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Visiting Assistant Professor. Partridge has served as President of the Maine Council of Churches and on the Board of the United Way of Greater Portland. His undergraduate degree is from Oberlin College. He holds two master's and a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, and also earned a master's in Divinity from Harvard University.

Thibeault of East Machias has been with Pine Tree Legal Assistance in the Native American Unit for five years. He has more than 20 years experience representing individual Native Americans and community groups in state, federal and tribal courts. Thibeault earned his undergraduate degree from Bowdoin College and his J.D. from University of California/Hastings College of Law.

These nominations must be reviewed by the Judiciary Committee and confirmed by the Senate.

Maine Maritime Academy

Governor Baldacci is nominating for appointment Lance Meadows from Penobscot as a Student Trustee to the Board of Trustees of the Maine Maritime Academy. Meadows is currently enrolled in the Academy and is expected to graduate in 2012. He is on the Dean's List and has worked for two years at Morse Cove Marine in Castine.

This nomination must be reviewed by the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and confirmed by the Senate.

Governor Baldacci Proposes Plan to Put People Back to Work

March 10, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the details of a \$79 million investment package that will create a projected 1,898 jobs and protect thousands more in Maine.

“To climb out of this recession, job creation and protecting our economy must be the highest priority,” Governor Baldacci said. “That’s why I have proposed to balance the State budget without a tax increase. It’s why I support cutting the top income tax rate for working Mainers and small businesses. And it’s why I am proposing a job creation investment package that will put people back to work this year.”

As the Maine Department of Labor will report today, unemployment in the State increased in January to 8.2 percent, up from 8.1 percent in December. Last year at this time, the unemployment rate was 7.3 percent. The number of unemployed in Maine is about 57,900, up by 6,500 from last year.

The Governor’s job creation bond package focuses heavily on transportation, including \$62 million for highway, port and rail projects.

Included in the proposal:

- \$28 million for highway reconstruction and paving, creating an estimated 750 jobs;
- \$3 million for a municipal highway challenge grant, which will be matched by local dollars and create an estimated 80 jobs;
- \$17 million for the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway in Aroostook County to preserve 240 miles of track. Without the investment, between 750 and 1,000 jobs could be negatively impacted;
- \$5 million for rail improvements in Lewiston-Auburn, which will allow for the purchase of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic line from Yarmouth to Auburn and make rail investments related to improved freight rail service and prepare for future passenger rail service. The project is estimated to create 75 jobs;
- \$8 million for the Ocean Gateway Deep Water Pier in Portland, which will enhance the economic potential of Portland Harbor and improve global economic competitiveness and create an estimated 96 jobs; and
- \$1 million for challenge grants from the Small Harbor Improvement Program, which is estimated to create 26 jobs.

The Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway has filed for abandonment. The Railway provides critical rail service to Northern Maine.

"I propose significant investments around the State, including resources to save rail service in Aroostook County. Without these resources, 22 major employers and the largest county in the State would be cut off from rail service," Governor Baldacci said. "That is unacceptable. Jobs are at stake, and we must act."

In addition, the bond package includes \$17 million for environmental and energy projects.

Projects include:

- \$3.2 million for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, which will be matched by \$16 million and create an estimated 307 jobs;
- \$1.8 million for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Construction Grant, for projects targeted to Limestone Sewer and Water District, St. Agatha and Machias, which will create an estimated 28 jobs;
- \$2 million for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, which will be matched by \$10 million and create an estimated 216 jobs or more;
- \$5 million to support component manufacturing for wind energy generation at the University of Maine;
- \$5 million to support the Maine Industrial Energy Efficiency Grant Program, which assists large companies with energy efficiency improvements and protects manufacturing jobs in the State. The investment will be matched by an estimated \$25 million in private funding. Using U.S. Department of Energy estimates, the program would create 320 jobs.

"The successes of our clean water and industrial grant programs speak for themselves," Governor Baldacci said. "People are put to work immediately, and jobs are saved. Our communities are healthier and our businesses are more competitive."

Governor Baldacci included \$2.6 million in his proposed changes to the current two-year budget to cover anticipated debt service for the job creation bonds.

"This is a fiscally responsible program that will put people to work," Governor Baldacci said. "At this critical junction, we must be prepared to take action to make our State stronger and to promote economic growth."

For more information on the bond package, visit

<http://www.maine.gov/governor/baldacci/policy/finances.html>

State Agencies Closed Friday, March 12

March 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, March 12, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, March 12, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part SSS:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the eighth of 10 closure days between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2010. The other dates that State agencies and offices will be closed are as follows:

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Friday, May 28, 2010

Governor Baldacci Sets Administration Priorities for Budget Restorations

March 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released his priorities for an anticipated increase in federal support to the State.

This week, the U.S. Senate passed legislation that will extend for six months enhanced Medicaid match rates originally included in the Recovery Act. The U.S. House of Representatives is expected to take action soon. The extension will result in more than \$86 million for Maine that can be used to restore State services threatened by declining revenues.

“The federal support will help Maine’s economy recover from the worst recession since the Great Depression. These resources offer a bridge to better days,” Governor Baldacci said. “But it does not relieve us of our obligation to make structural changes at all levels of government, to reduce costs and to be more efficient.”

Governor Baldacci emphasized that the federal support is one-time money and that it remains critical that Maine continue to restructure the way it delivers services at all levels.

“While our first priority is balancing the current two-year budget, we must keep an eye out for the future,” Governor Baldacci said. “We must continue to make the changes that will leave our State in the best position for economic recovery and growth while also protecting the most vulnerable.”

In addition to the \$86 million in increased federal support, the Governor has identified \$10.8 million in other savings that should be placed in the State’s Budget Stabilization Fund to begin restoring reserves. The amount is a combination of personal service and accounting savings and \$3.6 million in current budget language.

“The changes I’m proposing today clean up the current two-year budget, and also make it possible for us to improve Maine’s ongoing financial circumstances,” Governor Baldacci said. “The new savings identified in this proposal begin the process of rebuilding Maine’s reserves. We can’t afford to miss this opportunity to protect the State’s financial standing and prepare for the future.”

The Governor proposes to:

Fill the \$35 million placeholder proposed in the current budget for increased federal Medicaid support;

Restore \$33.6 million in proposed reductions in health and human services, including proposed cuts to the Drugs for the Elderly program, hospitals, nursing homes, service providers and crisis services;

Restore \$5.6 million to a proposed reduction in the Circuit Breaker Program, which benefits 13,000 low- and middle-income homeowners;

Restore \$5 million to municipal revenue sharing in fiscal year 2011;

Restore \$5 million to General Purpose Aid to Education;

Restore \$1.1 million for schools who voted to support the State's education reform law but whose partner districts rejected administrative consolidation;

Restore \$580,000 for adult education;

Provide \$470,000 in debt service for the University of Maine System to bring facilities at the University of Maine into ADA compliance and remove asbestos and mercury contamination;

Provide \$200,000 for the Maine Uncontrolled Hazardous Sites Cleanup; Restore \$80,000 to the Maine Judiciary.

Restorations in GPA and the Municipal Revenue Sharing are intended to blunt the impacts of declining revenues on local governments and schools, the Governor said.

"I have set my priorities after consultation with Democrats and Republican leaders," Governor Baldacci said. "It is my intention that this plan offer a roadmap to balance the State budget, restore important services and continue our efforts to make government more effective and efficient. I am committed to a bipartisan budget and believe that we can get there if we continue to work together in a spirit of openness and cooperation. Maine people want solutions, not political wrangling."

Commissioner Ryan Low of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services presented the details of the proposal to the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee of the Legislature today.

The current proposed changes to the two-year budget close a gap of about \$310 million created by declining State revenues.

Governor Announces Nominations to LURC

March 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations for appointment to the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC).

The Governor is nominating Sarah Farrand for a new appointment to the Land Use Regulation Commission and is nominating six for reappointment: Ernest Harvey III, Gwendolyn Hilton; Rebecca Kurtz; Edward Laverty; James Nadeau; and Steve Schaefer.

Farrand is a resident of Beaver Cove. She is employed at Eastern Maine Medical Center. Farrand is a member of the board of the Forest Society of Maine. She holds a bachelor's degree from Lynchburg College.

Harvey is a resident of Greenville and has been retired and doing consulting work since 1999. He worked on forestry issues for 40 years, including many years with Great Northern Paper. He has served nine years on the Commission. Harvey holds a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Maine.

Hilton, of Starks, has served on the Commission for four years. She has been a self-employed municipal and transportation planning consultant for 16 years. Before that, she worked at Maine Tomorrow for 10 years. She also currently serves on the Town of Starks Planning Board. Hilton earned a bachelor's degree from Roanoke College and a master's degree from Shippensburg University.

Kurtz is a resident of Phillips and has served on the Commission for the past five years. She is employed at the Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust. Kurtz also serves on the board of the Rangeley Lakes Region Historical Society. She is a graduate of the University of Maine Farmington.

Laverty, of Milo, has served for eight years on the Commission. For 33 years, Laverty has been a professor at the University of Maine. He holds a bachelor's and master's from the University of Maine and a Ph.D. from the State University of New York, Albany.

Nadeau, a resident of Winterville Plantation, has served on the Commission for six years. He has been Town Manager of Eagle Lake for 15 years. Nadeau holds a degree from the University of Maine Fort Kent.

Schaefer, of Grand Lake Stream, has served three years on the Commission. He has been a photographer for 36 years. He is a Registered Master Maine Guide in the State and completed a number of courses at Colorado State University.

The Maine Land Use Regulation Commission was created by the Maine Legislature in 1971 to serve as the planning and zoning authority for the State's townships, plantations and unorganized areas. Its purpose is to extend the principles of planning and zoning; to preserve public health, safety, and

welfare; to encourage the well-planned, multiple use of natural resources; to promote orderly development; and to protect natural and ecological values.

The nominations must be reviewed by the Legislature's Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee and confirmed by the Maine State Senate.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Quality of Place Legislation

March 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1389, “An Act to Create Regional Quality of Place Investment Strategies for High-value Jobs, Products, and Services in Maine,” into law. The Governor’s bill, sponsored by Senator Dennis Damon, establishes the Maine Quality of Place Council. The Council, in consultation with economic development districts, will help establish standards and guidelines for regional quality of place investment strategies.

“Maine is a unique place, and what is special about Maine is also the foundation of our future prosperity,” said Governor Baldacci. “Our downtowns, culture, livable communities, natural beauty and recreational assets give Maine a strong competitive edge in today’s global economy. Maine’s special character helps us retain and attract the skilled workers we need for our economy to grow.”

The Governor said that technological advancements enable people to live anywhere and still conduct their business.

“We want them here in Maine, because investment and jobs will follow them,” said the Governor.

The legislation was proposed by the Governor to put into place recommendations of the two Councils on Maine’s Quality of Place he created by Executive Order.

The Governor also credited Senator Damon as well as the Chairs of the Business, Research, and Economic Development Committee, Senator Elizabeth Schneider and Representative Nancy Smith, for their hard work on the bill. He also said Senator Chris Rector was instrumental for reaching across the aisle to support this new approach to strengthening our economy and growing jobs in Maine.

“I truly believe that the special character of Maine’s people, Maine’s communities and Maine’s natural resources are powerful economic drivers,” said Governor Baldacci. “It will take more hard work to realize the prosperity that Maine’s quality of place promises. We must now turn to the work of investing in and marketing these assets effectively. We must continue to shape Maine government and Maine’s economic and workforce development strategies to target investment in our quality of place assets. These efforts will create greater economic opportunity for Maine people.”

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on March 2.

U.S. Census Bureau Distributes Census Forms

March 18, 2010

Maine Residents Encouraged to Complete and Mail Back 2010 Census Form

AUGUSTA – This week, the U.S. Census Bureau distributed the 2010 Census to more than 130 million addresses across the nation. Mandated by the U.S. Constitution and conducted every 10 years, the Census counts every man, woman and child. Mailing back the Census form is the easiest way to participate in the 2010 Census, and every household should complete and mail back the form upon receipt.

“The 2010 Census is important to our community’s future. The data gathered will determine funding for vital local services as well as representation at all levels of government,” said Governor John E. Baldacci. “To ensure an accurate count, join me in taking 10 minutes to fill out the form and mail it back.”

Households served by the United States Postal Service will receive their forms in March 2010. Census workers will hand-deliver forms through April 2010 in all other areas. One of the shortest Census forms in U.S. Census history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Every person living in the residence, both relatives and nonrelatives, should be included on the form. People should be counted in the residence where they live and sleep most of the time.

“The 2010 Census is an historical event that will help shape the future of our country,” said Dr. Robert M. Groves, Director, U.S. Census Bureau. “It is vital that everyone is counted once and only once and in the right place.”

Census data are used to reapportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and for the subsequent redistricting of state and local governments. Census data also help to determine how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to tribal, state and local governments for services that affect local communities. Specifically, Census data are critical in determining locations for new hospitals, improving schools, building new roads, expanding public transportation options and creating new maps for emergency responders.

Census form answers are safe and confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents’ answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both.

Mailing back a form ensures an accurate count and lowers the cost of the 2010 Census by reducing the number of Census workers who must go door-to-door to collect Census data. About \$85 million is saved for every one percent increase in mail participation. Additionally, the Census Bureau saves \$60-\$70 per Census form returned by mail.

Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) will be available to assist those unable to read or understand the census form. For those with visual impairments, the Language Assistance Guide will be available in large print and Braille. Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons who do not have access to Video Relay Service (VRS) can call the TDD number, 1-866-783-2010. In addition to these options, Language Assistance Guides will be available in 59 languages at all QAC locations.

For more information, visit <http://2010census.gov/>

Maine Receives Critical Obesity Prevention Funds

March 19, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned that Maine has received \$4.28 million federal grant to address obesity issues. The federal Recovery Act funds come from the Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant, designed to support public health efforts to address obesity, physical activity and nutrition in order to decrease chronic disease and promote overall health.

“I am pleased that Maine is receiving this critical support for our aggressive efforts to address obesity, especially among our youth,” said Governor Baldacci. “These funds will enable us to support local partnerships designed to engage people in more physical activity and to improve nutrition.”

The grant funds efforts by Maine’s Center for Disease Control and Department of Health and Human Services, coordinated with the Healthy Maine Partnerships in the Cumberland Public Health District, to reduce the rate of obesity. The award was a result of a competitive grant process and supports positions at the local level to implement strategies over a two-year period. The local programs participating with the State are Healthy Portland, which serves the City of Portland, and Communities Promoting Health Coalition, serving the Sebago Lakes Region.

Maine has the highest rate of obesity in New England, with an estimated 30 percent of Maine youth being overweight or obese.

The Baldacci Administration, in conjunction with the First Lady, public health advocates, health providers, educators, Legislators and others have been working to build a foundation of public health collaboratives across the State and promote programs such as Take it Outside, WinterKids and others.

In addition, the Governor’s Universal Wellness initiative, which provides community-based support and services to help people be healthy, began this year.

The Governor said that the success of the grant hinged in large part on the existing success of Maine to establish a statewide public health system. He noted that in many areas, Maine has been implementing health care reform that is improving the quality of health care across the State.

“When I came into office in 2003 Maine ranked 19th in uninsured; today we are 6th best in the country,” said the Governor. “Through Dirigo Health Reform, we have been working to increase preventive care, encourage best practices and engage all stakeholders in the public health system. We established the State Health Plan to provide a roadmap for making Maine the healthiest state in the nation. We know we still have a long way to go, and that’s why these federal funds are important.”

For more information about the Communities Putting Prevention to Work, visit www.hhs.gov/recovery

Bestselling Authors Anita Shreve and Tess Gerritsen will Headline at Maine Festival of the Book

March 23, 2010

AUGUSTA - Opening Night: An Evening with Tess Gerritsen and Anita Shreve will kick off the fourth annual Maine Festival of the Book, which is presented by the literacy nonprofit Maine Reads. The two bestselling authors will discuss their work at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 9 at the Abromson Center at the University of Southern Maine. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door and may be purchased through the Maine Reads Web site www.mainereads.org.

The festival runs from April 9-11 and features more than 30 authors and performers participating in readings, signings, performances and panel discussions. With the exception of Opening Night, programs are free and unticketed. Opening Night will be hosted by Governor John E. Baldacci and First Lady Karen M. Baldacci.

For Opening Night, Anita Shreve will read from her work and Tess Gerritsen will talk about how she created her two most popular heroines, Jane Rizzoli and Maura Isles, who will be translated into an upcoming TV series.

Shreve began writing fiction while working as a high school teacher. She became a journalist and spent three years in Kenya, writing articles that appeared in magazines such as Quest, US and Newsweek. When she published her first novel, she began to write fiction full time, and has since published 14 more novels. In 1998, Shreve received the PEN/L. L. Winship Award and the New England Book Award for fiction. Her novel *The Pilot's Wife* was selected by the Oprah's Book Club in 1999 and a movie has been adapted from *The Weight of Water*.

Gerritsen attended medical school at the University of California, San Francisco. While on maternity leave from her work as a physician, she began to write fiction. In 1987, her first novel, *Call After Midnight*, was published. Gerritsen's first medical thriller, *Harvest*, was released in hardcover in 1996, and it marked her debut on the New York Times bestseller list. She has written a total of 22 novels. Her books have been top-five bestsellers in the United States and abroad. She has won both the Nero Wolfe Award (for *Vanish*) and the Rita Award (for *The Surgeon*).

The festival will also include free readings and discussions for a range of audiences from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 10, at the Abromson Center at the University of Southern Maine. Programs will run concurrently for approximately an hour each, giving attendees the opportunity to spend a day immersed in new literature and meeting some of their favorite authors while moving from programs ranging from biography, to writing novels, to gardening and historic preservation.

From noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday there will be Book Signing Bonanza, presented by Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance, featuring more than 20 authors including Monica Wood, Cynthia Lord, Julia Spencer-Fleming and Betsy Sholl. Additional programs will be presented Saturday and Sunday evenings at various Portland locations. A complete schedule is available at www.mainereads.org.

The Maine Festival of the Book is produced by Maine Reads in collaboration with organizations statewide. Dedicated to the cause of a more literate Maine, Maine Reads provides meaningful programs that celebrate Maine's rich literacy heritage and encourage literacy and collaboration.

In addition to the Maine Festival of the Book, Maine Reads presents Read With ME., which distributes books to kindergartners statewide, and the Maine Reads Community Literacy Project, which supports libraries statewide. Maine Reads is a 501c3 nonprofit.

Maine Students Compete in Energy Efficiency Competition

March 24, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today encouraged people to support a group of Maine students who are finalists in a national competition on environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. Jennifer Merrifield's 4th grade class at the Plummer Motz School in Falmouth is one of 10 finalists in America's Greenest School competition. People can support the class by voting online once a day at the Web site www.americasgreenestschool.com

"I commend these youngsters for helping to remind us all that we have opportunities every day to save energy and make our world a better place," said Governor Baldacci. "These students have demonstrated leadership in showing how we each can do our part to conserve energy, saving money and our environment. I hope that all Maine people will visit the Web site that contains their video of energy saving tips and will vote for them to win the competition."

Online voting for the contest began on March 22 and runs through April 2. The competition is for students in kindergarten through grade 12. The Plummer Motz School is the only finalist from the State of Maine.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Encourage Recycling and Reuse of Consumer Products

March 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1631, "An Act to Provide Leadership Regarding the Responsible Recycling of Consumer Products," into law. The bill, sponsored by Representative Melissa Walsh Innes (D-Yarmouth) and supported by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Natural Resources Council of Maine, among others, provides incentives to recycle and reuse more consumer products.

"Business, environmental groups and legislators came together to advance this practical approach to addressing the growing, expensive problem of managing consumer product waste, and I commend them for their efforts," said Governor Baldacci. "This law will not only help Maine people and businesses have safe and convenient ways to recycle these products responsibly, but will also help create opportunities for Maine businesses to collect, recycle and remanufacture old, unwanted products into new ones."

Specifically, the bill establishes a process to expand product stewardship through Maine Department of Environmental Protection rulemaking. Product stewardship involves the collection of certain products at the end of their intended use by their manufacturers. Maine has established product stewardship for a number of items, including certain electronics and mercury auto switches and mercury thermostats. Such items are more likely to stay out of the waste stream and manufacturers have the incentive through product design to use safer materials that are more likely to be able to be recycled or reused.

The bill sets criteria by which the department will address certain products for stewardship, and the process enables manufacturers and others to provide input.

"This approach builds on Maine's leadership for existing product stewardship programs for electronic waste and mercury-containing products," said the Governor. "This law will help identify additional troublesome products for privately-run collection and recycling programs, and will help Maine people and businesses have safe and convenient ways to recycle these products responsibly."

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on March 17.

Governor Calls for Aggressive Renewable Energy Development

March 25, 2010

PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Portland Mayor Nicholas Mavodones, fishermen and others at an event to urge for passage of federal clean energy and climate legislation. The event, sponsored by Repower Maine, was held at the Ocean Gateway overlooking the Casco Bay, an important commercial, fishing, tourism and recreational site.

“Dependence on unstable foreign energy is dangerous for our economy, environment and national security,” said Governor Baldacci. “In Maine, we are proud to lead the way toward a new energy future. This is a vital step that holds the promise of a more stable and secure energy supply that is renewable and homegrown, creating jobs right here in our State.”

The Governor said Maine has taken aggressive steps to reduce use of fossil fuels and to build a foundation for development of clean, renewable energy. He praised the Maine Legislature, Maine’s Congressional Delegation and the President for providing leadership in the pursuit of alternative energy.

“We have aggressively been building on innovative leadership and public-private partnerships to set achievable goals through renewable energy development,” said the Governor. “This includes using scarce resources to leverage significant investments in energy efficiency, weatherization and conservation. This will save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and will make Maine companies more competitive.”

Last year the Legislature passed the Governor’s comprehensive energy package, An Act Regarding Maine’s Energy Future, which establishes the goal to reduce the State’s consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030.

Late yesterday, the Utilities and Energy Committee gave unanimous support for the bill LD 1810, the Governor’s bill to implement the recommendations of the his Ocean Energy Task Force.

“We have the energy resources – in our wind, wood, water and with solar power – to break away from the crippling dependency on costly foreign oil,” said the Governor. “We have also received great support from President Obama and our entire Maine Congressional Delegation to get potential projects moving quickly so that we can achieve our goals to make Maine safer, more economically and environmentally secure, and grow good paying jobs right here at home.”

The Governor also recognized an important exercise being conducted in Portland related to test respond to a major oil spill. The drill brought together more than 600 local, State, federal and commercial partners for the training. The exercise began yesterday and is concluding today.

The Governor visited the training command center, based at the Holiday Inn By the Bay, following the renewable energy press conference. He thanked the participants and recognized the important work being conducted.

“This partnership and the preparation of our government agencies are essential to ensure the safety of the public, our environment and our economy in the event of an oil spill in our waters,” said the Governor.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Maintain Veterans' Cemeteries

March 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1421, "An Act to Ensure Perpetual Care of Maine Veterans' Cemeteries," into law. The bill, sponsored by Representative David Cotta (R-China) and supported by the Bureau of Maine Veterans Services, establishes a trust fund for the continuing maintenance and care of veterans' graves within the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System.

"Maine veterans are our heroes," said Governor Baldacci. "It's important that we ensure that they who have fought for our freedoms and way of life have the benefits available to which they are entitled; that they do not have to fight a second battle when they get home in order to obtain what was promised to them."

The trust fund will ensure that future budget constraints do not impact the ability of veterans' graves to be maintained. The account will receive monies from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs plot allowances and will accept donations, as well.

The Maine Bureau of Veterans Affairs will work with the Maine Treasurer to determine how funds in the account will be invested, and will set criteria for the expenditure of funds from the account.

"It's important that we do all we can to recognize those who have served our nation so honorably," said the Governor. "I applaud Representative Cotta, the Legal and Veterans Affairs Committee, the Bureau of Maine Veterans Services and the Legislature for supporting Maine veterans."

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on Feb. 23.

Governor Baldacci Signs Legislation to Balance Budget

March 31, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed LD 1671, “An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government.”

“In Maine, we have shown that bipartisanship can work,” Governor Baldacci said. “Democrats and Republicans came together during one of the most difficult economic times since the Great Depression. We have passed a responsible budget that protects lives, but also makes significant reductions in State spending.”

To highlight the task overcome with the supplemental budget, Governor Baldacci said that in 2001, State spending was \$2.65 billion. In 2011, the amount will be \$2.69 billion.

“In December, when I presented my plan to close an anticipated \$438 million gap in the State budget, my priorities were to align spending with revenues, make government more efficient and avoid raising taxes, while protecting the most vulnerable,” Governor Baldacci said. “In an overwhelmingly bipartisan way, we have approved legislation that does all of that.”

“State government will be smaller, we have made important structural changes that will reduce the cost of government going forward, and we will begin rebuilding our reserves,” Governor Baldacci said.

In signing the legislation, Governor Baldacci recognized the work of the members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, legislative leaders and the members of his Administration who worked to re-balance the State budget.

“Senate President Libby Mitchell, Speaker Hannah Pingree, Senate Republican Leader Kevin Raye and House Republican Leader Josh Tardy have demonstrated exceptional leadership. Their good-faith efforts and hard work helped to make this bipartisan effort possible,” Governor Baldacci said. “I also want to thank Sen. Bill Diamond, Rep. Emily Cain, Sen. Richard Rosen and Rep. Sawin Millett who worked together and brought forward a unanimous report out of the Appropriations Committee.”

In addition, Governor Baldacci recognized Commissioners Ryan Low, Brenda Harvey, Sue Gendron and other members of the Cabinet, who worked with the Appropriations Committee and their individual committees of jurisdiction to create an open process that resulted in collaborative budget. He also recognized State Budget Officer Ellen Schneider and Chief of Staff Jane Lincoln.

“These are not the best of times,” Governor Baldacci said. “But we have worked to make the best of the times we face.”

“This legislation contains many difficult cuts, but our State will be stronger and our finances more secure in the future.”

The emergency legislation takes affect immediately.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Protect Maine Consumers

March 31, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1541, "An Act to Protect Consumers from Charges after a Free Trial Period," into law. The bill, sponsored by Representative Robert Hunt (D-Buxton) and supported by Maine Attorney General Janet Mills, provides certain protections for consumers who participate in free trials of products or services offered by marketers.

The Governor said that the Attorney General's Office has fielded many complaints from people who were unaware of charges to their credit cards at the end of free trial periods.

"Many times the charges came from companies that got consumers' billing information indirectly, or consumers were unaware that their credit cards would be billed at the end of a free trial period unless they took the initiative to contact the merchant," said the Governor.

The bill the Governor signed ensures that a merchant obtain billing information directly from the consumer and that there is clear information about the terms of any free offer.

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on March 10.

President Obama to Speak to Maine People about Federal Health Care Reform

April 1, 2010

PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci will join thousands of Mainers at the Portland Expo today to hear President Barack Obama talk about the most sweeping federal health care reform law since Medicare was created more than 40 years ago. The Governor applauded President Obama's leadership and the support of Congresswoman Chellie Pingree and Congressman Mike Michaud to make health care reform a reality.

"In Maine, we have taken aggressive steps to improve the access to quality, affordable health care and now we have important federal support," said Governor Baldacci. "In fact, many aspects of the new federal health care reform mirror what we have done in Maine. We are in a strong position to implement many of the reforms enacted in Washington, D.C., because we have taken such steps. We look forward to working with all of Maine's Congressional delegation and all the people of Maine to assure a thoughtful, bipartisan implementation of this new law."

While Maine has enacted many of the provisions that are part of the Federal reform, some will need to be adjusted to reflect the new Federal law.

- Maine has insurance regulations and transparency much like that envisioned in the national law.
- MaineCare has already expanded coverage to most low-income people to 133 percent of poverty.
- Maine also has in place the Dirigo Health Agency that conducts many of the activities envisioned as an exchange, such as contracting with insurance companies, negotiating rates, determining eligibility and administering subsidies.
- Maine has restructured and consolidated its public health services to create a public health infrastructure that can implement the prevention and public health goals of national reform.

The bill signed into law by President Obama last week will significantly improve the ability for small businesses to offer coverage to employees. Under the new law, subsidies are available to about 37,000 small businesses in Maine. In addition, the federal health care reform outlaws waiting periods for children to age 19 who have pre-existing conditions and ensures parents can keep their children on their health plan until age 26.

The Governor has charged his Office of Health Policy and Finance with working with other State agencies and the Legislature to develop options for meeting requirements under the law. In addition, the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development, a stakeholder group representing businesses, consumers, providers, insurers and legislators, will formulate a plan of transition under the State Health Plan.

Maine Among Top States in H1N1 Vaccine Coverage

April 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci learned today that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has documented that Maine is among the top states for vaccine coverage for all ages against the H1N1 pandemic strain of influenza.

“Maine has long pursued the goal of improving access to quality health care to all our people,” said Governor Baldacci. “The public health system we established under Dirigo Health Reform has significantly improved the State’s ability to meet the complex and ever-changing dynamics of challenges such as the H1N1 virus.”

Maine’s vaccine rate for those in the U.S. CDC’s highest priority groups was tied for first at 51 percent, compared with the national rate of 33 percent. These highest priority groups include pregnant women, all people ages six months to 25 years of age, people 25 to 65 years of age with chronic conditions, and health care personnel, including emergency medical services personnel.

Sixty percent of Maine’s children ages six months to 17 years of age were vaccinated, compared with 37 percent nationally. Maine’s childhood vaccination rate was tied for second, after Rhode Island, and along with Vermont and Massachusetts. Maine and these states offered vaccine early in their schools. Senior citizens in Maine also had among the highest vaccination rates in the nation. Forty percent of Mainers 65 years of age and older were vaccinated, and this is nearly twice the national rate of 22 percent and tied for first.

Maine’s overall rate of vaccinating 37 percent of all people six months old is higher than the national average of 24 percent, and is also one of the highest rates in the nation.

“We are extremely grateful for the thousands of Maine people who worked hard to make sure that as many people as possible were offered vaccine,” said Dr. Dora Anne Mills, Director of the Maine CDC in the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. “I am especially grateful to Maine’s newly formed public health infrastructure. Because of this infrastructure, there were identified people and organizations we could call upon to help organize efforts in every area.”

The data are from a national telephone survey conducted by U.S. CDC through the months of December, January and February.

There is still evidence of influenza circulating, including H1N1, in Maine as well as elsewhere. Maine Center for Disease Control recommends people who are unvaccinated contact their health care providers, call 211, or check the flu clinic locator at www.maineflu.gov to find vaccine near them.

Governor Signs Legislation to Improve Air Quality in Maine

April 5, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1662, "An Act to Improve Maine's Air Quality and Reduce Regional Haze at Acadia National Park and Other Federally Designated Class I Areas."

State Senator Seth Goodall (D- Sagadahoc) sponsored the legislation, which was supported by Maine Tribes, the Maine Pulp and Paper Association, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, the Maine Chapter of the National Lung Association and others. The bill will improve Maine's air quality and skyline visibility, reduce haze on bad air days and provide cleaner, healthier air.

Specifically, the legislation establishes incremental reductions in the sulfur content of all fuel oils sold in the State of Maine beginning in 2016. Final reductions will take place in 2018. By 2018, Maine's sulfur emissions will be reduced by an estimated 60 percent from today's levels.

"The resulting cleaner air is good news for all Maine citizens," said Governor Baldacci. "This is especially beneficial for populations most susceptible to health issues caused by pollution: the young, elderly, asthmatics, and those who have lung or heart problems. Regional health impact studies have suggested that Maine can save nearly \$150 million in avoided health costs associated with the implementation of this program. In addition, future visitors to Maine's pristine federal parks and wilderness areas - Acadia National Park, Campobello International Park, and Moosehorn National Wildlife Wilderness Area - will be able to see improvements when visiting these areas."

According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, sulfur emissions are the greatest contributor to poor visibility and particle pollution on bad air days. Maine is working with the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and Tribes to pursue coordinated sulfur reduction strategies. These states have agreed to implement similar sulfur reductions strategies over the course of the next eight years. In addition, federal laws will require all large upwind coal fired power plants to reduce sulfur emissions from their stacks during this same time period.

Governor Congratulates IDEXX Laboratories

April 6, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci congratulated Jonathan Ayers, CEO of IDEXX Laboratories, for the company's expansion plans that were announced earlier today.

"IDEXX Laboratories is a valued corporate partner in the State," said Governor Baldacci. "The company has continually shown its commitment to Maine, and this recent expansion is another sign of that commitment. Given the tough economic times, the ability to add hundreds of jobs – and to do it here at their global headquarters – is something to celebrate."

According to the company's profile, IDEXX Laboratories employs approximately 4,700 people worldwide. Headquartered in Maine, there are currently 1,600 employed in Westbrook.

The company announced today that it plans to build a new administrative building. The approximately \$50 million investment will enable the company to expand and add an estimated 500 new jobs in Maine over the next few years.

Maine Takes Next Step in Expanding Health Information Technology

April 6, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has established two entities that are responsible for expanding and coordinating health information technology throughout the State.

In addition, the Governor learned today that HealthInfoNet, the State's designated health information exchange, has been awarded \$4.7 million in federal Recovery Act funds. The money will be used by HealthInfoNet to provide support for health care providers who adopt health information technology in their practice.

These funds are in addition to \$6.5 million received in February to develop and implement a statewide health information technology plan.

The Governor created by Executive Order a health information technology coordinator. Establishing such an appointment was a requirement of the federal Recovery Act. The Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology will operate from within the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance. The Order also establishes a Health Information Steering Committee that will advise the Coordinator.

"This is an important step in reaching our goal to increase quality and efficiency in health care delivery," said Governor Baldacci. "With our public and private partners, we have been working hard to improve care that all Maine people receive. All together, the additional funds and the creation of the State infrastructure to support and plan for collaborative efforts to advance health information technology will help Maine meet the goals of the State and the federal government."

The federal support through the Recovery Act funding allows the expansion of Maine's health information exchange, HealthInfoNet, to eventually reach all healthcare providers in the State.

The text of the Executive Order follows.

09 FY 10/11

April 1, 2010

An Order to Improve Health Information Exchange by Establishing the Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology and the Health Information Technology Steering Committee

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009 the President signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), which contained the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH); and

WHEREAS, the HITECH Act includes a significant investment in health information technology and health information exchange to improve and expand opportunities to reach all health care providers in an effort to improve the quality and efficiency of healthcare; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance established a multi-stakeholder health information technology steering committee to coordinate opportunities arising from the HITECH Act, which has been meeting since May, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology has recently awarded the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance a cooperative agreement to advance the goals of the HITECH Act and requires the appointment of a state Health Information Technology Coordinator; and

WHEREAS, effective coordination throughout state government and the private sector is important in implementing the goals of the HITECH Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order the establishment of the Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology within the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance and the creation of the Health Information Technology Steering Committee as follows:

Purpose

The Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology shall:

- Serve as a focal point on health information technology (HIT) and health information exchange (HIE) policy and assure coherent, collaborative cross agency state HIT planning;
- Serve as a clearinghouse for all state HIT policy;
- Align HIT planning efforts with the State Health Plan;
- Coordinate ARRA HIT/HIE planning and implementation, and provide financial and regulatory oversight of HIT and HIE efforts and initiatives throughout the state;
- Develop and disseminate public information about HIT and HIE through partnerships with stakeholders; and
- Work collaboratively with HealthInfoNet, the State's designated health information exchange, or its successor, pursuant to the public-private partnership as outlined in the State HIT Plan.

To carry out the foregoing purpose and charge, the office is administered by a director and such staff as are necessary and appropriate to carry out its activities. The director is responsible for securing external funding and administering grants to support the purposes of the office. The director is authorized to take action as necessary to carry out the goals of the office as set forth in this Executive Order, including the goals of the State HIT Plan.

A Health Information Technology Steering Committee (HITSC) shall advise the Office of the State Coordinator for HIT in developing the vision, goals, and prioritization areas for advancing HIT and HIE across Maine and to develop appropriate governance, oversight, and accountability mechanisms to assure success. The HITSC shall present a draft state HIT Plan for approval by the Director of the Office of the State Coordinator for HIT, or his or her designee.

Membership and Support

The Committee shall consist of twenty-six (26) members, twenty-two (22) of whom are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Director of the Office of the State Coordinator for HIT shall serve as Chair.

The Steering Committee Members appointed by the Governor shall include:

- The Commissioner of Labor, or designee
- The Director of the Office of Information Technology, or designee
- The Director of the Dirigo Health Agency/Maine Quality Forum, or designee
- The Director of DHHS/CDC or designee
- The Director of DHHS/Maine Care Services, or designee
- The Director of the Maine Health Data Organization, or designee
- The Director of the Office of the State Coordinator for HIT
- The Executive Director or designee of the State's designated health information exchange organization
- One individual with expertise in health information exchange and/or health information technology
- Two individuals representing health care providers
- One individual representing home health providers
- One individual representing hospital systems
- One individual representing federally qualified health care centers
- One individual with expertise in health care quality
- One individual representing behavioral health providers
- One representative of consumers
- One individual with expertise in the insurance industry
- One individual representing a business or businesses

- One individual with expertise in health care data information
- A representative of the university system
- A representative of the community college system

The President of the Senate may appoint two members of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House may appoint two members of the House of Representatives. Members appointed by the President of the Senate and by the Speaker of the House shall serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority.

The Committee may call on representatives of other state agencies or organizations not represented on the Committee to provide limited information or to participate fully in the Committee when, in the Committee's discretion, that person has responsibilities or expertise in a particular area that would be helpful to the work of the Committee. Staff support to the Committee shall be provided by the Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology, Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, the Department of Health and Human Services and other state agencies as needed.

Procedures

The Committee shall meet at times and places called by the Chair, and no less than once a month. The Committee shall establish sub-committees to address specific areas of HIT implementation as the need arises. The members of the Committee shall serve without compensation.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 1, 2010.

John E. Baldacci

Governor

Governor Mourns Passing of Dr. Frederick Hutchinson

April 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of Dr. Fred Hutchinson.

Hutchinson served as the President of the University of Maine from 1992 to 1997.

“Fred Hutchinson was a great advocate for improving educational aspirations for Maine people,” said Governor Baldacci. “His dedication to opening up educational opportunities for Maine families will remain through the legacy of the Hutchinson Center in Belfast.”

Governor Baldacci also noted the leadership Hutchinson contributed to the State as Chair of the Dairy Task Force that the Governor established in 2003 to help address issues in the industry around dairy pricing.

“Fred’s contributions to Maine’s dairy industry were invaluable in finding solutions to stabilize pricing and thus preserve this vital industry in the State.”

“My thoughts and prayers go out to Fred Hutchinson’s family and to the many friends he made over the years,” said the Governor.

Governor Signs Prohibition on Debit Card Surcharges

April 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed LD 1779, “An Act to Prohibit Surcharges on the Use of Debit Cards.”

“Since 1981, Maine law has protected consumers from credit card surcharges,” Governor Baldacci said. “This legislation updates the law to include debit cards, which have grown in popularity and use. This bill is an important protection that will prohibit surcharges on those who use debit cards.”

In addition, Governor Baldacci sent a letter to Superintendent Lloyd LaFountain of the Bureau of Financial Institutions directing that he form a stakeholders group to examine issues related to credit and debit card fees and their impact on Maine merchants.

“During the discussion of this issue, Maine merchants raised concerns about the cost of credit and debit card transactions and interchange fees that they pay when consumers use a card to purchase goods and services,” Governor Baldacci said. “During these difficult times, it is important to protect consumers. At the same time, it is equally important to ensure that Maine’s small business owners are not unfairly burdened by onerous card fees.”

The stakeholders group will meet during the summer and will discuss the broader issues surrounding the use of debit and credit cards. If problems are identified, the group will also work to identify options for relief within the context of State law.

Governor Supports Preble Street with Spaghetti Supper

April 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced that he is hosting a spaghetti supper to benefit Preble Street. The spaghetti supper will be held from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14, at the Italian Heritage Center in Portland.

“In these tough economic times, it’s more important than ever to support the efforts of Preble Street, which provides the homeless and the poor with a comprehensive array of services in the Portland area,” said Governor Baldacci. “Preble Street is a vital resource and safety net for those who need help. I appreciate the dedicated service that the leadership, staff and volunteers of Preble Street provide every day in the community.”

Recently Preble Street lost funding from Catholic Charities of Maine and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. While the Governor believes that the Diocese was within its rights to withdraw funding, he wants to help protect the services Preble Street provides.

The suggested donation for the supper is \$5 per person or whatever attendees can afford.

Maine Civil War Web Site Unveiled

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – On the 149th anniversary of the first shot of the American Civil War, Governor John E. Baldacci announced a new State Web site that provides a wealth of information on Maine's role in the Civil War. Information will continue to be added, with the first collection - a list of Maine's Civil War Monuments - available today at <http://www.maine.gov/civilwar/sentinels.html>

"Maine people should be proud of the role of the State in the effort to maintain the Union during the Civil War," said Governor Baldacci. "This State government Web site is one of many collections of information that will be available as we look forward to marking the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. As a student of history, I have found there is a remarkable treasure of insightful materials that have been carefully compiled for this anniversary by many dedicated historians. I especially want to thank Maine State Historian Earle Shettleworth for his dedication and leadership in making this information available to the public."

A year from today, April 12, 2011, will mark the beginning of the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War. In preparation for this observance, Governor Baldacci created a Maine Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee in 2009. The Committee has been working to support projects that contribute to a more full understanding of Maine's Civil War heritage.

A central Web site for information on the Maine Civil War Sesquicentennial will be available at <http://maine.gov/civilwar>

Shettleworth compiled an extensive list of Maine's Civil War Monuments. He found 148 such memorials. A key factor in choosing to make this information accessible on the Internet is to encourage comments and input from the public.

For more information, visit

<http://maine.gov/civilwar/sentinels.html>

The bottom of the page contains the link to the materials and information about each memorial located by town.

Governor Signs Legislation to Further Improve Tribal-State Relations

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to sign LD 445, "An Act To Improve Tribal-State Relations," into law.

The bill, sponsored by Representative Charles Priest (D-Brunswick), adds a representative from the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians to the Maine State Legislature beginning in 2012. Among other actions, the bill also ensures that laws that address cooperative agreements among Maine communities expressly include the Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation, thereby clarifying that the tribes have the ability to enter into interlocal agreements to meet the needs of their people.

"This legislation is another important step in ensuring that our Native American Tribes in Maine have a voice in decisions that impact our communities," said Governor Baldacci. "As I said earlier this year, when I signed my Order to improve communications between the Executive Branch in Maine and our Native American Tribes, we cannot truly succeed as a State unless all our people and all of our communities succeed. Working collaboratively is key."

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Increase Investment in Maine Communities

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1530, “An Act To Facilitate Recovery Zone Facility Bonds, Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds and Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds,” sponsored by Senate President, Elizabeth Mitchell (D-Kennebec).

This legislation will enable public and private entities in Maine to access low-cost financing for eligible projects under the federal Recovery Act.

“The Recovery Act has enabled us to provide critical investments in the State and preserve and add jobs during the deepest recession since the Great Depression,” said Governor Baldacci. “Maine has a great opportunity to continue to put these valuable investments to work.”

Under the bill, private businesses and public entities can take advantage of financing for shovel ready projects. Maine has been allocated more than \$235 million in bonding authority by the Recovery Act for private, public and energy-specific projects.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Keep Broadband Expansion on Track

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1778, “An Act To Enable the Installation of Broadband Infrastructure,” sponsored by Representative Cynthia Dill (D-Cape Elizabeth).

The bill will facilitate Maine Fiber in building its dark fiber network throughout the State. The federal Recovery Act had provided more than \$25 million to build dark fiber networks across Maine, including many unserved and underserved areas. This legislation will help the project get built within the time deadlines set forth from the federal Recovery Act. Maine Fiber will now be able to hang 1,100 miles of dark fiber optic cable on the 36,000 poles in the State.

“This legislation moves Maine further down the path to expanding state-of-the-art broadband service to every reach of Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “By connecting Maine people and businesses to high-speed broadband – students, workers, families and companies – Maine will be able to compete for business and jobs now and into the future.”

The Governor said that the Federal Recovery Act is helping Maine in the aggressive efforts to improve its information superhighway.

“My office, the Maine Legislature, ConnectME Authority and the Broadband Strategy Council have worked with the Maine Congressional delegation, the federal government and private enterprise to expand broadband,” said Governor Baldacci.

Governor Signs Legislation to Increase R&D Investments

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to sign LD 1, “An Act To Stimulate Capital Investment for Innovative Businesses in Maine,” sponsored by Senator Peter Mills (R-Somerset).

This legislation allows the Maine Public Employees Retirement System to invest in seed money to businesses in the technology sector. The Finance Authority of Maine is authorized to approve refundable tax credits equal to up to 80 percent of investments.

“We in Maine have been working with the federal government through the Recovery Act and with private partners to invest in our economy and good paying jobs,” said Governor Baldacci. “This legislation is another way to increase investments in a sector that produces high paying jobs.”

Governor Applauds Agreement on Job Creation Plan

April 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today applauded the bipartisan agreement reached in the Legislature on a job creation investment package. The Governor held a public signing of the legislation today at the State House.

“Once again, we have managed to overcome partisan differences and do what is right for our State,” Governor Baldacci said. “Last week, it appeared as if we had reached an impasse, but through hard work and patience we have crafted a job creation package that is responsible and balanced.”

Governor Baldacci worked directly with Legislative Leaders over the weekend to reach a compromise that was approved by the Legislature today.

“Democratic and Republican Leaders, including members of the Appropriations Committee, worked together in good faith to develop a job creation package that will put people to work this year, make critical investments in highways, rails and ports, and strengthen Maine’s economy.”

The bond package includes:

- \$24.8 million in highway construction and repair;
- \$7 million to protect rail service in Aroostook County;
- \$5 million to expand rail service in Lewiston-Auburn;
- \$4 million to help restore rail service in Western Maine along the Mountain Division Line;
- \$6.5 million for a new deep-water port in Portland;
- \$500,000 for the Small Harbor Improvement Program;
- \$5 million for the advanced equipment for the University of Maine to build a component manufacturing sector for wind power; and
- \$5 million for a community-based teaching clinic operated by a college of dental medicine and for upgrades to community-based health and dental care clinics around the State.

In addition, the agreement includes up to \$7 million in cash that was originally slated for the State’s Budget Stabilization Fund to provide the balance of the resources necessary for the purchase of the Aroostook Rail line. It also includes language that would immediately place \$7 million into the BSF with any year-end surplus.

The Governor will also issue an Executive Order creating an oversight panel that to monitor and review elements of the take over of the Aroostook rail line. The panel will assure transparency and guide policy

questions during the transition to a new operator, and will include representatives of the Executive and Legislative Branches as well as private sector and nonprofit economic development representatives.

The agreement also makes changes in the current questions scheduled for the June ballot, including:

- Part B is reduced by \$1.25 million (The Small Enterprise Growth Fund is reduced from \$5 million to \$4 million; The Maine Historic Preservation Commission is reduced from \$1.5 million to \$1.25 million);
- Part D is reduced by \$12 million, eliminating the proposal to bond for energy efficiency programs;
- Part E is reduced by \$250,000 (Funding for working Maine waterfronts is reduced from \$2 million to \$1.75 million).

The investment package totals \$57.8 million, with \$13.5 million being eliminated from the current June ballot. Total new bonding in the proposal would be \$44.3 million.

The bond package, which required a two-thirds vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, must now be approved by voters.

Governor Honors Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault Award Recipients

April 13, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today applauded the work of frontline caregivers, advocates and others who are working to eradicate sexual assault in Maine. The Governor also recognized April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

“Today we honor those who have gone above and beyond in fighting the serious crime of sexual assault, which reports show impact one in five adults in Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “The partnerships represented here today are vital in addressing the underlying causes of assault and working to prevent them, as well as helping victims and survivors.”

The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault presented two awards at this year's Blaine House Tea to individuals for their work to end sexual assault. Jane Root, Executive Director of the Maliseet Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Project, received the Make a Difference Award. Jeanette Michaud, RN, of Frenchville, was presented the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner Award.

The text of the Sexual Assault Awareness Month proclamation follows.

WHEREAS, sexual assault affects women, children and men of all racial, cultural and economic background; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault may also have associated consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, depression, homelessness, eating disorders and suicide; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault can be devastating for not only the survivor, but also for the family and friends of the survivor; and

WHEREAS, no one person organization, agency or community can eliminate sexual assault on their own, but we can work together to educate our entire population about what can be done to prevent sexual assault, support victim/survivors and their significant others, and increase support for agencies providing services to victim/survivors; and

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month provides an excellent opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing sexual violence,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim the month of April, 2010

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Governor Creates The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force

April 13, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed an Executive Order creating The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force.

The Task Force was mandated in LD 1826, “An Act To Authorize Bond Issues for Ratification by the Voters for the June 2010 Election and November 2010 Election,” which was signed into law by the Governor on April 12.

The law asks voters to approve \$7 million to purchase and preserve approximately 240 miles of railroad track in Aroostook County currently owned and operated by the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, which in February filed with the Surface Transportation Board to abandon the line.

“The loss of rail service in Aroostook could be catastrophic for many Maine companies and communities,” Governor Baldacci said. “It’s clear that the State must act.”

“This Task Force will ensure that abandonment and acquisition process is done openly and in a way that protects the interests of Maine taxpayers,” Governor Baldacci said. “It will also work with the Department of Transportation and other interested parties to develop an operating plan once the railroad is purchased.”

The Task Force shall consist of 13 members, seven of whom are appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall designate a chair and vice-chair.

The Task Force members appointed by the Governor shall include:

The Commissioner of Transportation, or the Commissioner’s designee; Three representatives of economic development or business associations in Aroostook County; Two representatives of businesses that use the rail line subject to abandonment, recommended by those businesses; and One representative of a statewide business organization.

The President of the Senate shall appoint two members of the Senate, one from each of the major political parties, and the Speaker of the House shall appoint four members of the House of Representatives, two from each of the major political parties. At least four of the members shall be from Aroostook County.

Maine’s United States Senators and the Representative from the 2nd Congressional District, or their staff representatives, are invited to participate as ex officio, non-voting members of the Task Force.

The text of the Executive Order follows:

An Order to Create the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2010, the Montreal Maine and Atlantic Railway, Ltd. (the "MMA") filed with the Surface Transportation Board (the "STB") an Application for Abandonment of 233 miles of mainline track and subdivisions in northern Penobscot and Aroostook Counties (the "Abandonment"); and

WHEREAS, this action has the potential to cause catastrophic financial damage to the shippers and industries currently utilizing this rail service, to their employees, and to the economy of the entire State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, the Abandonment would eliminate energy-efficient, cost-effective transportation options, which would severely disadvantage Maine's competitive position in the global economy; and,

WHEREAS, effective coordination between local stakeholders and state government officials in responding to the proposed Abandonment is imperative;

NOW THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order the establishment of the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force, the purposes and composition of which are set forth below.

Purpose and Duties

The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force, shall:

- Provide input to the State of Maine during the course of the STB Abandonment process to ensure that State interests are articulated and protected in a coordinated and effective manner; and,
- Advise the State of Maine in its efforts to evaluate, and, if feasible, structure and implement the acquisition of the real property and rail assets that are the subject of the Abandonment (the "Corridor"); and
- Ensure transparency in the acquisition process and in the issuance of a Request for Proposals to secure a Third Party Operator for rail service over the Corridor.

The State of Maine, working with the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force in connection with an acquisition, will ensure:

- That the State receives clear title to the land and track that make up the Corridor without assuming the financial obligations of the MMA;
- That the State receives a credit for previous state grants to be applied to the purchase price of the Corridor;
- That the purchase price is established by an independent analysis of the net liquidation value of the property right and assets to be acquired;
- That an assessment of current track conditions be performed and that appropriate applications be made for all available federal funding opportunities;

- That the State will seek cooperation and contributions from shippers utilizing the lines to sustain rail operations;
- That the acquisition will be conditioned upon the inclusion of permanent trackage rights from the MMA on the north and south ends of the acquired lines to allow access to the interconnections at St. Leonard Station, southeast of Madawaska, and Brownville Junction; and
- That the State will solicit and secure a third party operator through a competitive process and oversee operations to ensure improved standards of service over the Corridor with appropriate equipment to run the service efficiently and essential and ongoing investments in maintenance.

Membership and Support

The Task Force shall consist of thirteen members, seven of whom are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall designate the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Task Force Members appointed by the Governor shall include:

The Commissioner of Transportation, or the Commissioner's designee; Three representatives of economic development or business associations in Aroostook County; Two representatives of businesses that use the rail line subject to abandonment, recommended by those businesses; and One representative of a statewide business organization.

The President of the Senate shall appoint two members of the Senate, one from each of the two major political parties, and the Speaker of the House shall appoint four members of the House of Representatives, two from each of the two major political parties. At least four of the members shall be from Aroostook County. Members appointed by the President and the Speaker serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority.

Maine's United States Senators and the Representative from the 2nd Congressional District, or their staff representatives, are invited to participate as ex officio, non-voting members of the Task Force.

The Department of Transportation shall provide staff support to the Task Force, and may request assistance of other state agencies as needed.

Procedures

The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force shall meet at times and places called by the Chair. Members of the Task Force serve without compensation.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 13, 2010.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Help Search and Rescue Teams

April 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1519, “An Act To Ensure Search and Rescue Dogs Are Afforded Access to Public Accommodations without an Extra Charge,” sponsored by Senator Stan Gerzofsky (D-Cumberland).

This legislation will ensure rescue teams, including canine units, that are assisting the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in a search and rescue operation can have their certified rescue dog stay with them at a Maine hotel or inn without paying an extra charge.

“Maine relies on Warden K-9 teams and volunteer teams that can come from miles away to help in search and rescue missions,” said Governor Baldacci. “We want to encourage certified teams to continue to provide this life-and-death service, and that’s what this bill does.”

Maine’s Chief Game Warden testified during a hearing on the legislation that there are 10 certified K-9 unit teams in the State.

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on March 24.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Expand Lyme Disease Awareness

April 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1709, “An Act To Enhance Public Awareness of Lyme Disease,” sponsored by Representative Edward Legg (D-Kennebunk).

“The incidence of Lyme Disease has been growing nationwide and here in Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “This legislation puts more efforts to work at the State level to ensure that Mainers can access information about Lyme Disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment.”

There were 970 probable and confirmed cases of Lyme Disease in Maine in 2009, as reported by the Maine Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Rep. Legg’s bill establishes the month of May as Lyme Disease Awareness Month and directs the Maine CDC to make available a wide range of information to the public regarding the disease and how to prevent it.

“I am pleased that the Maine CDC has in place a Lyme Surveillance Report, which can be accessed online,” said Governor Baldacci.

In addition, this bill directs health insurers to report claims data on the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme Disease.

Information on Lyme Disease in Maine can be accessed at <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/ddc/epi/vector-borne/lyme/>

Information on other diseases and health conditions of concern can be found on the main Web page for the Maine CDC at <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/index.shtml>

Commissioner of Education Accepts National Position

April 14, 2010

Governor Congratulates Gendron on Service; Names Acting Commissioner

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced today that Susan A. Gendron will leave her position as Commissioner of the Maine Department of Education at the end of April.

Governor Baldacci also announced that Deputy Commissioner Angela Faherty will be named Acting Commissioner following Commissioner Gendron's departure.

"Sue has helped to build a culture in Maine that all students need to graduate ready for college, career and citizenship," said Governor Baldacci. "She does not accept that any of us have the right as educators, parents or politicians to decide some kids will never succeed or to lower our expectations for students. She has been a tremendous asset to the State, and I'm proud of the work she has done as Commissioner."

Gendron is leaving the Department to become policy director for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, a group of more than 35 states working to develop common assessments and to compete for a share of \$350 million in federal Race to the Top education reform funds.

Gendron was sworn in as Commissioner in March 2003. During her tenure, Maine has joined with three other states to administer the New England Common Assessment Program, a common assessment for reading and mathematics.

Commissioner Gendron expanded Maine's laptop program, which has provided notebook computers to all Maine middle school students since 2002 – making Maine the first and only state with a statewide 1:1 computing program, making laptops a possibility for every student in grades 7-12. The high school expansion, announced in June 2009, marks the world's largest educational technology program of its kind, once again putting Maine at the leading edge in using technology to support education.

In 2005, Gendron worked with the Governor and Legislature to pass a new Essential Programs and Services formula, a model for funding education based on adequate and equitable resources for all students, to replace the former model which was based on prior year spending.

Commissioner Gendron has consistently pushed for high standards and aspirations for students. The number of high school students who have taken college courses has increased significantly; she helped craft legislation that requires high schools to offer multiple pathways for students to graduate and strengthened Career and Technical Education.

She worked to oversee the successful implementation of School Administrative Reorganization, the most sweeping education restructuring in Maine since the Sinclair Act of 1947. Under the reorganization law, Maine has reduced the number of school districts and streamlined operations so that more state and local tax dollars can go into programming, rather than to non-classroom operations.

She introduced the Reinventing Schools Coalition model of standards-based education to Maine. This method, which allows students to progress at their own speed and only move forward to new material after mastering previous material, is being piloted in two Maine school districts, with six to eight more strongly considering adoption. Commissioner Gendron oversaw a major expansion of early childhood programming, with 35 to 40 new programs in schools around the State, and worked closely with the First Lady to secure funding and implementation of the first Educare site in Maine, the first in New England, scheduled to open in Waterville this fall. This comprehensive early childhood program is designed to serve between 150 and 200 mostly low-income children from before they are born to age 5, during this most critical brain development stage. The goal is to measurably increase their school-readiness and significantly reduce unnecessary special education costs.

Commissioner Gendron has been a member of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Board since 2006 and is currently President of the national organization. In that position she has been at the forefront of national efforts to develop common standards and common assessments.

Gendron has received many honors, including the Maine School Superintendents' Distinguished Educator Award, 2001; the Maine Superintendent of the Year Award, 2002; the Maine Education Association – Friend of Education Award, 2005; the University of Southern Maine Distinguished Alumni Award, 2006; and the State Education Technology Directors Association – Pushing the Envelope Award, 2008.

Governor Baldacci praised Gendron for her work advancing standards-based education and innovative high school reforms.

Governor Baldacci said Maine will benefit from Commissioner Gendron's continued high profile on the national education stage in her new work.

"Maine is a recognized world leader in technology and in the forefront of standards-based education. Sue's involvement at the national level, bringing her experiences from Maine, will influence and guide national policy. Sue's involvement gives Maine a seat at the table."

Governor Baldacci said Faherty's appointment as Acting Commissioner following Gendron's departure will assure a seamless transition.

"Deputy Commissioner Faherty is committed to continuing the shared vision for improving student achievement across the state," Governor Baldacci said.

"She has a bold vision for excellence and equity, and has achieved results through effective management and collaboration. She has demonstrated expertise in supervision, evaluation, consultation, teaching, facilitation and development of quality professional development for educators and leaders. She is a true believer in establishing clear goals with a clear purpose, and building consensus."

Faherty earned her bachelor's degree from the City College of New York and received her master's in Education from the City University of New York and a doctorate in Education from the University of Missouri.

She has been a classroom teacher at the elementary, middle and high school levels in literacy development, special education, and gifted and talented in the New York City, Missouri and Salt Lake City school systems. She was assistant professor at the University of Northern Iowa and adjunct professor at the University of Southern Maine, St. Joseph's College and Walden University.

Governor Signs Order to Put Maine in Better Position to Access Federal Education Funds

April 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today issued an Executive Order to put Maine in a better position to compete for a portion of the \$4.3 billion in federal Race to the Top education funds. The order directs the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Education to establish a stakeholder group to review potential models for evaluating teacher and principal performance, a critical requirement of the federal competitive grant program. The federal standard for Race to the Top requires that school districts be able to use student achievement as one of a multiple of elements in teacher and principal evaluations.

Convening a stakeholder group was a provision added by the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs to the Governor's Bill, LD 1799, which the Governor signed into law on Monday, April 12. Under the Executive Order, the Commissioner of Education will bring the stakeholders together for discussion and action sooner than required under the legislation.

"It is essential that those on the frontlines of education in Maine are part of the process of developing the model by which Maine will meet the federal guidelines for Race to the Top funding," said Governor Baldacci.

Maine needs to have a process for developing the models well underway by June 1 to meet the application deadline of the federal government. The model or models will show school districts how to use student achievement data as an element in the evaluation process of teachers and principals. Federal awards will be made in September.

The text of the Executive Order follows.

11 FY 10/11

April 14, 2010

**AN ORDER TO CONVENE STAKEHOLDERS TO BEGIN REVIEWING EVALUATION MODELS THAT MEET
FEDERAL RACE TO THE TOP CRITERIA**

WHEREAS, the Legislature has enacted and the Governor has approved LD 1799, an Act to Encourage the Use of Models in the Collection and Use of Student Achievement Data (Public Law 2009, Chapter 626); and

WHEREAS, the legislation is part of the state's effort to achieve reforms needed to comply with current and expected changes in federal law and to improve the State's chances for a significant grant under the federal Race to the Top competition; and

WHEREAS, one element of necessary reform is the ability for local school units to include student achievement as one of multiple elements in the process of evaluating teachers and principals; and

WHEREAS, the application to the federal government for Race to the Top must be completed before the effective date of LD 1799; and

WHEREAS, convening stakeholders immediately to begin considering evaluation models will speed the work required in LD 1799, and will provide evidence to the federal government in evaluating Maine's reform efforts;

NOW THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order the Commissioner of the Department of Education to:

Convene a group of stakeholders, as defined in LD 1799, comprised of a representative of the Maine School Boards Association, the Maine Principals' Association, the Maine Education Association, the Maine School Superintendents Association and the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities; and

Lead the stakeholder group in reviewing and approving, not later than May 14, 2010 at least one model for the evaluation of professional performance of teachers and principals that meets the federal Race to the Top criteria for improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 14, 2010.

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Governor Ceremonially Signs Legislation to Grow Film Industry in Maine

April 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1449, “An Act To Expand Tax Incentives for Visual Media Productions,” sponsored by Representative Thomas Watson (D-Bath).

“Our film production professionals are among the best in the world, and the benefits to Maine from having a robust film industry are undeniable,” said Governor Baldacci. “Film production boosts our economy through direct spending, tourism and jobs. These are benefits that spread through our communities. This bill makes changes to Maine’s incentives so that we will have more effective strategies for growing Maine visual media production.”

Tax incentives encourage production companies to use Maine for their projects. Visual media productions are eligible for Maine Seed Capital Tax Credit Program.

The legislation the Governor signed also changes the income tax credit and ensures that eligible productions must be certified by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The bill also calls for the Maine State Film Office to report annually to the Legislature on the implementation of the credit and reimbursement program.

The bill was signed into law by the Governor on Feb. 23.

Finance Commissioner Accepts Position with University of Maine Farmington

April 15, 2010

Commissioner Ryan Low Will Leave the Department of Administrative and Financial Services in July

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced today that Ryan Low will leave his position as the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services in early July.

“Ryan has done an incredible job during one of the most difficult economic times in a generation,” Governor Baldacci said. “His integrity and depth of knowledge about State government have earned him the trust and respect of Democrats and Republicans alike. He is one of my closest advisers, and his patience and wisdom will be missed.”

Low has accepted a position as the Interim Vice President for Administration at the University of Maine Farmington, his alma mater. The appointment is subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

Low was sworn in as Commissioner in September 2008 after serving for almost two years as the Governor’s Deputy Chief of Staff. He has also been the State Budget Officer and Associate Commissioner within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

In addition to running one of the State’s largest departments, which includes oversight of State facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology and Maine Revenue Services, Low was also the State’s lead on implementing The American Recovery Act.

“In addition to being the primary architect of the State budget, Ryan has effectively managed the enormous task of overseeing and implementing the Recovery Act in Maine,” Governor Baldacci said. “Ryan has done great work with some of the most complicated and nuanced issues facing this Administration.”

Of particular note, Low managed the process that led to five consecutive unanimous committee reports in support of budget bills.

In his new position, Low will be responsible for all budgetary matters and business affairs at the University of Maine Farmington and will serve as a major adviser to the President.

Governor Baldacci will name an Acting Commissioner later this spring.

State Agencies Closed Monday and Tuesday, April 19th and 20th

April 16, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that Maine State government offices are closed for the Patriot's Day holiday on Monday, April 19.

In addition, many Maine State government offices are closed on Tuesday, April 20, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

"Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days," said Governor Baldacci. "When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities."

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part

SSS: http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the ninth of 10 closure days between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2010. The last that State agencies and offices will be closed this fiscal year is Friday, May 28, 2010.

Governor Welcomes New Business to Maine

April 16, 2010

SACO – Governor John E. Baldacci today welcomed a new business to the State of Maine. T4G, a Toronto-based technology company, has chosen Saco as the location for their U.S. headquarters as they expand.

“I am pleased that T4G has recognized that Maine is a great place to do business,” said Governor Baldacci. “This Pine Tree Zone certified company plans to bring more than 40 good paying jobs to Maine.”

The company credited the State’s Pine Tree Zone program as a critical incentive for locating in Maine. T4G is the 281st certified company in the Pine Tree Zone program. In total, the Pine Tree Zone incentive program has brought an anticipated 7,600 jobs with an anticipated investment of more than \$810 million.

“T4G has been recognized in Canada as a great workplace for employees and a good corporate citizen,” said the Governor. “This is an important corporate philosophy and I believe they will fit well in our State both for the valuable employment opportunities they offer and for their commitment to the communities in which they are located.”

T4G is a full-service professional services company founded in 1995. More information on the company can be accessed at www.t4g.com

Maine Wins \$30 Million Energy Efficiency Grant

April 21, 2010

Recovery Act Funding Will Create Jobs, Help Businesses and Homeowners

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci said today that Maine has received a \$30 million federal grant from The Recovery Act to fund energy efficiency upgrades in Maine.

“Maine is recognized as a national leader in our efforts to improve energy efficiency,” Governor Baldacci said. “The work that we have been doing at MaineHousing and at Efficiency Maine has demonstrated our ability to put resources to work quickly, creating jobs and reducing energy consumption.”

The competitive award was announced today by Vice President Biden and is part of \$452 million in Recovery Act funding through the U.S. Department of Energy awarded to 25 communities around the country. Under the Retrofit Ramp-Up initiative, communities, governments and nonprofit organizations will work together to pioneer innovative programs to support large-scale retrofits and make energy efficiency accessible to thousands of homeowners and businesses.

The application for the grant was submitted by the Maine Public Utilities Commission’s Energy Programs Division in partnership with MaineHousing.

The grant will establish a revolving loan fund called the Maine Home Performance Fund to make buildings more energy efficient. The strategy uses grant funds to subsidize retrofits for the first three years of the program. The fund will be accessible to residents in towns that have adopted Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs that meet guidelines established by the State.

The funding will also allow the program to accurately measure energy savings and document reduced carbon emissions, attracting private investors and creating a sustainable revenue stream to fund weatherization and energy efficiency improvements.

“The Retrofit Ramp-Up funding will allow Maine to develop an innovative solution to expand residential efficiency,” said John Brautigam, Director of the Energy Programs Division at the Maine PUC. “The Maine Home Performance Fund will create a new financing option that will continue our efforts to break down barriers to homeowners and businesses who want to reduce energy consumption.”

Maine has one of the highest rates of homeownership in the country. Maine’s aging housing stock and high cost of fuel shows the potential value of retrofitting homes and businesses to improve energy efficiency.

“The revolving loan fund and PACE allow us to address key barriers to homeowner investment in weatherization by reducing or eliminating the up-front costs to consumers,” said Dale McCormick, Director of MaineHousing.

Maine received one of the highest awards in the competitive process. New York State Research and Development Authority received \$40 million; Maine, Michigan and Los Angeles County, Calif., each received \$30 million. Twenty-one other awards ranged from \$5 million to \$25 million.

Governor Baldacci Celebrates Earth Day

April 22, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today celebrated Earth Day with local businesses that are committed to implementing green practices, ranging from reducing waste, saving energy, buying local and using environmentally friendly cleaning products.

“While it was a Wisconsin Senator who organized the first Earth Day 40 years ago, Maine leaders like Senator Muskie and Senator Mitchell led the way in ensuring that our country’s air and water are cleaner and our communities more livable,” said Governor Baldacci. “Maine continues to lead, whether it’s in pursuing renewable energy development, weatherizing homes, or working with the private sector to implement a combination of energy efficiency and environmentally sound practices. We can take great pride in the fact that governments, families and businesses here in Maine are working together to end dependency on fossil fuels, reducing carbon emissions, reducing use of toxic materials and recycling more every year.”

The Environmental Leader certification program, a voluntary program run by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), engages Maine businesses in the effort to become better stewards of the environment. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection launched Maine’s Environmental Leader program for the hospitality sector four years ago. There are more than 100 certified lodging establishments, ranging from small bed and breakfasts to large hotels. In 2007, the DEP began to certify restaurants as green for their environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. More than two dozen restaurants have been certified. Last week the DEP, with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, expanded its Environmental Leader program to grocery stores.

The Governor celebrated the success of the Environmental Leader program at The Senator Inn & Spa, which is certified green for in the hospitality and restaurant categories. Joining the Governor were other area businesses that participate in the program, including Fairfield Inn in Augusta; Quality Inn and Suites in Augusta; Maple Hill Farm in Hallowell; and Hannaford in Augusta.

“Tourists come to Maine because of our pristine environment – our great outdoors, our beaches, our small friendly towns. Maine’s certified Environmental Leaders reflect the enthusiasm of Maine people and visitors to our great State to keep it clean,” said Governor Baldacci. “In addition to seeing an impact on their bottom lines in energy savings, these businesses also benefit from being recognized by the tourism industry as being a certified green business. More and more, visitors appreciate businesses that implement green practices.”

According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, annual savings of participating businesses include:

- o More than 18 million gallons of water;

- o More than 11 million kilowatts, yielding a cumulative \$1.2 million dollars per year in energy cost savings, or more than \$10,000 per business per year;
- o Nearly 8,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, the equivalent to taking more than 700 cars off the road;
- o More than 1 million pounds of solid waste by composting food waste;
- o More than 1.5 million pounds of solid waste through recycling programs; and
- o Most of these businesses now use safer cleaning chemicals. This has resulted in the annual reduction of nearly 10,000 total pounds of cleaning chemicals, 1,600 of which are considered toxic or hazardous.

The Governor said that Maine State government has been a model for energy efficiency efforts since 2003. Accomplishments include:

- o Becoming the first state to purchase 100 percent of its electricity from renewable resources;
- o Purchasing biodiesel to heat State buildings;
- o Creating a more fuel efficient State vehicle fleet, including purchase of 104 hybrids and reducing fuel use by 17 percent since 2002;
- o Using environmentally friendly cleaning chemicals and hand soap in State buildings, reducing the total amount of product used by thousands of pounds, including 900 pounds considered hazardous material;
- o Requiring green certified computers and electronic equipment, reducing state energy usage by 917,000 kilowatt hours and eliminating 10,375 pounds of hazardous waste from the waste stream; and
- o Purchasing paper with at least 30% post consumer content, saving 1,830 tons of wood.

On Wednesday, the State of Maine received a grant of \$30 million from U.S. Department of Energy to make buildings more energy efficient and to measure energy savings, attracting private investors and creating a sustainable revenue stream to fund weatherization and energy efficiency improvements.

For more information about the Maine DEP's Environmental Leader program, including a list of participating Maine businesses, visit:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/innovation/greencert/lodging.htm>

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/innovation/greencert/restaurant.htm>

Governor Baldacci Forms Committee to Work on Implementation of Federal Health Care Reform

April 23, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci yesterday formalized the public process by which the State will plan how to implement the comprehensive federal health care reform law signed by President Obama in March.

Using the existing infrastructure of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, State health officials, the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development and others, a steering committee will begin the planning to meet requirements under the federal law. The Governor's Office and its Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee will also work with the Joint Select Committee on Implementation created by the Maine Legislature this session, stakeholders and local, federal and tribal governments.

"Maine has already taken aggressive steps to improve the access to quality, affordable health care," said Governor Baldacci. "Many aspects of the new federal health care reform mirror what we have done in Maine, and now the new federal law gives support to additional ways to expand coverage and contain costs. We are in a strong position to implement many of the federal reforms, and we need to proceed with a full analysis of the law and identify steps to go forward."

Some specific issues the steering committee is charged with reviewing as soon as possible are the ability to access federal funds to maximize affordable coverage options and plan for the creation of the State Health Exchange.

While Maine has enacted many of the provisions that are part of the Federal reform, some will need to be adjusted to reflect the new Federal law.

- Maine has insurance regulations and transparency much like that envisioned in the national law.
- MaineCare has already expanded coverage to most low-income people to 133 percent of poverty.
- Maine also has in place the Dirigo Health Agency that conducts many of the activities envisioned as an exchange, such as contracting with insurance companies, negotiating rates, determining eligibility and administering subsidies.
- Maine has restructured and consolidated its public health services to create a public health infrastructure that can implement the prevention and public health goals of national reform.

The membership composition, specific duties and other aspects of the steering committee are set in the Executive Order signed by the Governor on Thursday, April 22. The text of the Executive Order follows.

12 FY 10/11

April 22, 2010

AN ORDER IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL HEALTH REFORM IN MAINE

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama signed the historic Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act on March 23, 2010 and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 on March 30, 2010; and

WHEREAS, under National Health Reform up to 37,000 Maine small businesses will qualify for tax credits to help make coverage more affordable, provide affordable coverage options for 125,000 Mainers who are uninsured and 40,000 Mainers who purchase health insurance through the individual market; and

WHEREAS, states have an important role to implement many components of National Health Reform, including certain immediate reforms; and

WHEREAS, Maine is uniquely situated to implement National Health Reform due to its history of insurance reform and Dirigo Health Reform efforts in Maine including expanding access to health insurance, improving quality of care, strengthening public health, and reducing cost growth; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated response by the executive branch is important to ensure timely and successful implementation of National Health Reform across all departments and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance (GOHPF) was established in January, 2003 by Executive Order 06 FY 02/03 to serve as a focal point on health policy and assure coherent, collaborative cross agency state health policy, maximize Medicaid and other federal programs, and chair the Cabinet Council on Health representing all agencies in state government with health-related responsibilities to assure coordinated policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish the Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee and direct the following:

To assure ongoing coordination, the GOHPF shall lead the executive branch working with the Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee to implement National Health Reform.

Membership

The Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee shall be comprised of the following permanent members. The Director of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance shall serve as Chair of the Steering Committee.

- Director, Governor's Office of Health Policy & Finance
- Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services
- Commissioner of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation
- Superintendent of Insurance
- Executive Director of the Dirigo Health Agency

Other members of the administration may be invited to serve on an as-needed basis with respect to specific issues affecting their scope of responsibility. The Steering Committee shall work with the GOHPF health policy committee of key state agencies to support its mission, and draw membership from any other agency or department of state government as needed.

Duties

The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, with the Steering Committee, shall work collaboratively with tribal, local and federal governments. The GOHPF will serve as the state liaison with the federal government for health reform implementation.

The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, with the Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee, shall:

- Advise the Governor and provide coordination and leadership for implementation of federal health reform across all departments and agencies of the executive branch;
- Assure on-going information sharing and coordination of efforts with the Legislative Joint Select Committee on Health Care Reform Opportunities and Implementation;
- Assure broad stakeholder engagement by consulting the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development to ensure open dialogue and to further the success of health reform implementation; and
- Ensure the State Health Plan is consistent with on-going implementation efforts, which must include a chapter outlining issues and options for National Health Reform implementation.

The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, with the Health Reform Implementation Steering Committee, shall immediately:

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of the new federal legislation;
- Identify the steps necessary to produce an implementation plan;
- Develop a plan to pursue funds pursuant to the national temporary high risk pool to maximize affordable coverage options for Maine citizens;
- Plan for the creation of the State Health Exchange; and
- Plan for the implementation of all other components of National Health Reform, including specific action steps, timelines, and assignment of lead responsibility.

The Advisory Council on Health Systems Development will serve as the advisory stakeholder group to the Steering Committee and shall assist in developing the analysis and implementation process required by this Executive Order.

The GOHPF may seek external funding and the aid of advisory panels as appropriate.

Reporting

The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance shall report monthly to the Governor on the Steering Committee's implementation efforts beginning May, 2010.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 22, 2010.

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Governor Baldacci Announces Rail Task Force Membership

April 26, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced the members of the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force, which he established by Executive Order on April 13. The Task Force will ensure a public and transparent process and input as issues regarding abandonment and potential acquisition of the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway.

In addition, the Governor announced that State of Maine and the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway have agreed to confidential mediation, which postpones action on proposed abandonment of the rail lines by the Federal Surface Transportation Board (STB). The STB will conduct the mediation.

"I am pleased that we have begun mediation which gives us the ability to review the very important issues regarding preservation of this vital rail line," said Governor Baldacci. "The Congressional Delegation, Maine Legislature and my Administration have been working together to ensure the viability of the rail, which is an economic lifeline to Northern Maine workers and businesses."

The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force was mandated in LD 1826, "An Act To Authorize Bond Issues for Ratification by the Voters for the June 2010 Election and November 2010 Election," which was signed into law by the Governor on April 12.

The law asks voters to approve \$7 million to purchase and preserve approximately 240 miles of railroad track in Aroostook County currently owned and operated by the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, which in February filed with the Surface Transportation Board to abandon the line.

The original Executive Order to create the Task Force was amended to expand membership and add to the purpose of the Task Force.

The Task Force members appointed by the Governor and the text of the original and amended Orders follow.

Chair: Transportation Commissioner David Cole

Vice-Chair: Representative Josh Tardy

Commissioner of Transportation, or designee

- David Cole, Commissioner, Maine Department of Transportation

Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or designee

- Thaxter Trafton, Commissioner of Economic Development

Legislators – Senators appointed by Senate President; Representatives appointed by Speaker of the House

- Senator Troy Jackson (Aroostook County)
- Senator Walter Gooley (Franklin County)
- Representative John Martin (Eagle Lake)
- Representative Ken Theriault (Madawaska)
- Representative Josh Tardy (Newport)
- Representative Bernard Ayotte (Caswell)
- (Alternates: Representatives Richard Cleary of Houlton and Peter Edgecomb of Caribou)

[NOTE: All State Legislators representing affected areas of the State are invited to participate as stakeholders (non-voting)]

Representatives of Businesses that Use the Rail Line Subject to Abandonment

- Jeff Dutton, President and CEO, Twin Rivers (formerly Fraser Papers)
- John Cashwell III, Managing Director, Portage Wood Products.
- Travis Turner, Plant Manager, Louisiana-Pacific New Limerick Mill

Representatives of Economic Development or Business in Aroostook County

- Robert P. Clark, Executive Director, Northern Maine Development Commission
- Virginia "Ginny" Joles, President, LEAD (Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development)
- Chris Anderson, Chair of the Board, Aroostook Partnership for Progress

Representative of a Statewide Business Organization

- Dana Connors, President, Maine State Chamber of Commerce

Invited to participate as ex-officio, non-voting members:

- A representative of Senator Snowe, Senator Collins and 2nd Congressional District Representative Michael Michaud

Invited to participate as stakeholders (non-voting)

- Economic development, civic and community organizations and affected businesses
- Other interested individuals and organizations

AN ORDER TO CREATE THE AROOSTOOK RAIL ADVISORY TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2010, the Montreal Maine and Atlantic Railway, Ltd. (the "MMA") filed with the Surface Transportation Board (the "STB") an Application for Abandonment of 233 miles of mainline track and subdivisions in northern Penobscot and Aroostook Counties (the "Abandonment"); and

WHEREAS, this action has the potential to cause catastrophic financial damage to the shippers and industries currently utilizing this rail service, to their employees, and to the economy of the entire State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, the Abandonment would eliminate energy-efficient, cost-effective transportation options, which would severely disadvantage Maine's competitive position in the global economy; and,

WHEREAS, effective coordination between local stakeholders and state government officials in responding to the proposed Abandonment is imperative;

NOW THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order the establishment of the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force, the purposes and composition of which are set forth below.

Purpose and Duties

The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force, shall:

- Provide input to the State of Maine during the course of the STB Abandonment process to ensure that State interests are articulated and protected in a coordinated and effective manner; and,
- Advise the State of Maine in its efforts to evaluate, and, if feasible, structure and implement the acquisition of the real property and rail assets that are the subject of the Abandonment (the "Corridor"); and
- Ensure transparency in the acquisition process and in the issuance of a Request for Proposals to secure a Third Party Operator for rail service over the Corridor.

The State of Maine, working with the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force in connection with an acquisition, will ensure:

- That the State receives clear title to the land and track that make up the Corridor without assuming the financial obligations of the MMA;
- That the State receives a credit for previous state grants to be applied to the purchase price of the Corridor;
- That the purchase price is established by an independent analysis of the net liquidation value of the property right and assets to be acquired;
- That an assessment of current track conditions be performed and that appropriate applications be made for all available federal funding opportunities;

- That the State will seek cooperation and contributions from shippers utilizing the lines to sustain rail operations;
- That the acquisition will be conditioned upon the inclusion of permanent trackage rights from the MMA on the north and south ends of the acquired lines to allow access to the interconnections at St. Leonard Station, southeast of Madawaska, and Brownville Junction; and
- That the State will solicit and secure a third party operator through a competitive process and oversee operations to ensure improved standards of service over the Corridor with appropriate equipment to run the service efficiently and essential and ongoing investments in maintenance.

Membership and Support

The Task Force shall consist of thirteen members, seven of whom are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall designate the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Task Force Members appointed by the Governor shall include:

- The Commissioner of Transportation, or the Commissioner's designee;
- Three representatives of economic development or business associations in Aroostook County;
- Two representatives of businesses that use the rail line subject to abandonment, recommended by those businesses; and
- One representative of a statewide business organization.

The President of the Senate shall appoint two members of the Senate, one from each of the two major political parties, and the Speaker of the House shall appoint four members of the House of Representatives, two from each of the two major political parties.

At least four of the members shall be from Aroostook County. Members appointed by the President and the Speaker serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority.

Maine's United States Senators and the Representative from the 2nd Congressional District, or their staff representatives, are invited to participate as ex officio, non-voting members of the Task Force.

The Department of Transportation shall provide staff support to the Task Force, and may request assistance of other state agencies as needed.

Procedures

The Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force shall meet at times and places called by the Chair. Members of the Task Force serve without compensation.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 13, 2010.

13 FY 10/11

April 26, 2010

AN ORDER TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING THE AROOSTOOK RAIL ADVISORY TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, it is critical for parties affected by the potential abandonment of a portion of the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway to be well-represented on the Advisory Task Force; and

WHEREAS, including the Department of Economic and Community Development in membership of the Task Force would provide expertise in the statewide implications of a potential abandonment;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby amend Executive Order 10 FY 10/11 as follows:

By amending the Purpose and Duties section to include, as a duty of the Aroostook Rail Advisory Task Force:

- Communicate with, and encourage and facilitate involvement of, a broad range of stakeholders regarding the work of the Task Force;

By amending the membership section to add the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development, or designee and to increase to three the number of representatives of businesses that use the rail line subject to abandonment.

In all other respects, the terms of Executive Order 10 FY 10/11 remain the same.

Effective date

The effective date of this Executive Order is April 26, 2010.

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Governor Ceremonially Signs Brunswick Redevelopment Legislation

April 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate the signing of LD 1669, “An Act to Enhance the Redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station,” sponsored by Senator Stan Gerzofsky (D-Cumberland).

“We’ve made significant progress, and this legislation takes another critical step,” said Governor Baldacci. “Together, the Maine State Legislature, Maine’s Congressional Delegation, the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, Maine’s Community College and University Systems and many other partners in the public and private sectors have worked with my office and other State agencies to ensure that Brunswick is prepared to grow jobs and new business when the Naval Air Station is closed. This bill enables vital resources to be put to use to redevelop the Mid-Coast economy.”

The legislation establishes goals and provides funding mechanisms to support economic development and higher education efforts. Among other things, it establishes an airport fund and enables the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority to act as an airport authority. The bill establishes the Midcoast Campus as a campus of Southern Maine Community College. A temporary fund is created to support the Midcoast Campus and certain municipal services as determined by the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority.

“Many local, State and federal partners have recognized that the best way we can prepare for the base closure is to work together and pool our significant talents and resources,” said the Governor.

The bill had been signed into law by the Governor on March 12.

For more information on the legislation, including bill language, visit

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/LawMakerWeb/summary.asp?ID=280035109>

Governor Mourns Passing of Kay Lebowitz

April 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of Catherine “Kay” Lebowitz.

“I had the great pleasure of serving in the State Legislature with Kay Lebowitz, and she was always gracious, caring and passionate about service to the people of Bangor and to all of Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “Kay always put her community first and she touched many lives. She was an icon in the City of Bangor, serving in so many capacities and taking great pride in its people. She remained a tireless friend to all, and showed great spirit throughout all her life. I will especially remember her dedication as a Troop Greeter these last few years, and the tremendous kindness and care she gave to the troops.”

Governor Baldacci Honors Fitness Award Winners

April 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today honored nine groups, businesses and individuals for their fitness achievements at the 2010 Maine Fitness Awards. The awards ceremony, sponsored by the Governor's Council on Physical Activity, recognizes achievements in encouraging and promoting physical activity throughout Maine.

"Good health impacts everything we do," Governor Baldacci said. "That's why, since coming into office in 2003, it has been my goal to see Maine become the healthiest state in the nation. The work you do significantly contributes a healthy workforce, healthy families and healthy communities."

Governor Baldacci told the group that the majority of deaths in Maine are caused by four chronic diseases: cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes, and that these diseases are influenced by preventable health hazards.

The State has worked with local, regional, federal and private partners to improve health care across Maine and to focus on prevention efforts and healthy lifestyles. Recent achievements include better coordinated public health activities, implementation of a Universal Wellness Initiative, and promoting activities through the "Take it Outside" campaign.

The Governor thanked the awardees, runners up and honorable mentions at the Hall of Flags event. "Whether it's at the school, workplace or municipal level, it's important that we establish and build upon successful models that make physical activity a basic part of all of our lives," said the Governor. "I want to especially thank those being recognized today for your innovative approaches to meeting this goal."

The list of award recipients follows:

Youth – School Category – Kennebunk Elementary School, Kennebunk

Youth - Community Category – Cub Tracks Triathlon, EMMC/UMaine

Special Populations Category – Exercise and Conditioning for Easier

Living (U-ExCel), University of New England, Biddeford

Community Category – State of Maine, ME First Program

Lifetime Achievement Category – Jim Lawler, Auburn

Healthy Workplace – Small Business Category – Valley Distributors, Inc., Oakland

Healthy Workplace – Medium Business Category (2 recipients) – Martin's Point Health Care Wellness Program, Portland

New England Rehabilitation Hospital of Portland

Healthy Workplace – Large Business Category – MaineGeneral Medical Center, Augusta

Governor Orders Flag Flown at Half-Staff in Bangor on April 30

April 29, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today ordered that flags be flown at half-staff on Friday, April 30, in the City of Bangor for Kay Lebowitz, who had served in the Maine State Legislature and the Bangor City Council, and who dedicated many years of community service to the people of Bangor and the State of Maine.

Funeral services for Kay Lebowitz are being held Friday, April 30, 2010.

Governor Baldacci Says Maine Ready to Deploy Resources to Gulf Coast

April 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today said that he has placed a call to Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal and has asked Maine government departments to review potential resources that could be deployed to the Gulf Coast area following the oil slick that threatens that region.

“The tragedy unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico impacts our entire nation,” said Governor Baldacci. “Though no specific request has been made of us at this time, it’s important that we stand ready with available resources if needed.”

The Governor explained that Maine is working through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), a mutual aid compact among all 50 states that defines an effective process and issues related to sharing disaster resources. Under EMAC, Maine sent over 300 responders and health care workers to Louisiana and Mississippi in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

This morning, EMAC requested that states identify resources for potential response to the Gulf Coast. No formal request for the deployment of resources has yet been issued, however. The oil spill has the potential to affect Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida coastal areas.

The lead agency in Maine for oil spill response is the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Governor Baldacci also has specifically asked the Maine Department of Marine Resources and Maine Emergency Management Agency to review potential resources to deploy to the Gulf, if they are needed.

Commissioner David Littell of the Maine DEP said, “The spill in the Gulf is exactly what DEP's Responders are trained to do. We are making arrangements today to get skimmers and booms, if requested, to the Gulf States. We are also evaluating how tightly we can run our rotation (we have 8-9 spills a day in Maine) to spare personnel for the Gulf spill. With the magnitude of this spill and the ecological destruction that will occur if it hits the coastal wetlands, we will do everything we can to assist the Gulf coast states.”

The DEP has identified a number of oil skimmers, storage devices, workboats, oil containment booms, pumps, trained oil and hazardous materials technicians and Geographic Information systems expertise that is available for deployment. The State is continuing to research other potential resources in the event they are needed, such as the shellfish public health experts with the Department of Marine Resources.

To ensure an effective response of the most appropriate resources to the right location, as determined by the impacted region, the Maine Emergency Management Agency coordinates any deployments of State resources through EMAC. MEMA has provided current resource availability information to the EMAC Coordinator for Louisiana.

“We are all concerned about what is taking place in the Gulf,” said Governor Baldacci.

Governor Baldacci Receives German Friendship Award

May 4, 2010

AUBURN – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined local and regional officials as well as representatives of the German government, who presented the Governor with The Federal Republic of Germany Friendship Award. Consul General Friedrich Loehr, the Chief of Mission at the Consulate General Boston, presented the award to the Governor at the Lufthansa Technik Facility in Auburn.

Consul General Loehr said that Governor Baldacci has devoted great effort to bringing Germany and Maine closer together, especially in regards to economic ties. He also singled out the energy sector as one that connects Germany to Maine.

Governor Baldacci thanked the German government and said he has appreciated the opportunity to work with businesses and public officials to help build Maine's workforce, create jobs and work toward clean energy.

"I appreciate the jobs represented at this facility and what it means for the economy of the region and the State," said the Governor. "In addition, the German government has been a leading country in renewable energy development, which is why I led a trade mission there last year that was focused on energy."

There are 40 people employed at the Lufthansa facility, which is refurbishing two old airplanes.

Governor Baldacci Celebrates Major Gift from Harold Alfond Foundation to MaineGeneral

May 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined members of the MaineGeneral community, Harold Alfond Foundation and local, regional and State officials at an announcement that the Alfond Foundation is giving \$35 million to serve health care needs of Maine in the Kennebec Valley and surrounding communities. Among efforts supported by the donation will be a new facility at MaineGeneral's North Augusta campus.

"Harold Alfond's spirit and legacy are imbued in the Center for Cancer Care that bears his name, and this generous gift further supports his vision for quality health care for all Mainers," said Governor Baldacci. "When the Center opened, I joined Harold as he visited patients and staff. He would be so proud of this day and of the model of care that the Cancer Center has become. The Alfond Foundation's donation will ensure that more healing can be accomplished at this campus."

The Governor praised MaineGeneral for modeling consolidation through the Cancer Center and for pursuing high quality care for patients. In addition, last week the Governor recognized MaineGeneral for its innovative approach and progress in significantly improving the health of its employees.

"MaineGeneral has been working to meet the challenge of decreasing preventable chronic disease and to promoting a healthy workforce, healthy families and healthy communities," said the Governor.

Governor Mourns Death of Soldier from Maine

May 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci learned today of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Spc. Wade A. Slack of Waterville died May 6 while serving in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan with the U.S. Army's 707th Ordnance Battalion from Fort Lewis, Washington.

"We can never take for granted the service of our men and women in uniform," Governor Baldacci said. "They are the best among us and sacrifice for their country and their communities. Our prayers go out to Spc. Slack's family and friends."

Governor Baldacci spoke today with Spc. Slack's mother and father, who live in Waterville.

"He loved his family and he loved his country," Governor Baldacci said. "He was a dedicated soldier who served his country with honor. All of Maine mourns his passing."

Governor Baldacci will order flags lowered to half-staff on the day of Spc. Slack's funeral.

No additional information is available at this time.

Governor Requests Major Disaster Declaration

May 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today requested a major disaster declaration for the Counties of Hancock and York impacted by the rain storms and flooding that began March 12 and ended April 1, 2010. As a result of a thorough inventory of damage, the Governor believes the threshold for federal assistance has been met for Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation for Hancock and York Counties.

If granted, the federal government would reimburse towns, counties and State agencies for 75 percent of costs incurred in response to the spring severe weather events.

“The storm weather that began with heavy rains and continued with high winds leading to coastal surges, beach erosion and significant debris greatly strained resources throughout these counties and the State,” said Governor Baldacci. “It’s important to remember that the series of storms that took place within the timeframe addressed in this request followed prior storm and flooding from February 23 through March 2 that resulted in a major disaster declaration. The combined impact of all these storms led to a continued state of response, debris clearance, road closures, clean-up and repairs.”

The Governor said that a Preliminary Damage Assessment verified more than \$1.6 million in damages. Among the hardest hit areas was the pier at Maine Maritime Academy.

The text of the letter to President Obama is attached.

May 7, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Paul Ford, Acting Regional Administrator

FEMA Region One

99 High Street, 6th Floor

Boston, MA, 02110

Dear President Obama:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you

declare a major disaster for Hancock and York Counties in the State of Maine as a result of high winds, heavy rains, inland and coastal flooding, saturated ground and erosion which impacted the State during the time period of March 12 through April 1, 2010. This incident period is defined based on weather and hydrologic information compiled by the National Weather Service and the USGS. Antecedent high water conditions were sustained and exacerbated by periodic heavy rains and severe weather throughout the period.

According to the USGS, this period began with stream flows well above the historic median flows in western Maine. Flows remained well above median flows throughout the entire period. Along with the elevated stream flows, the ground was saturated in western and midcoast areas of Maine from a previous storm and flooding event February 23rd through March 2nd that resulted in a major disaster declaration.

A cycle of rain, wind and tidal events continued throughout the incident period, necessitating local emergency response, creating large amounts of debris and washing out roads and other infrastructure.

According to the National Weather Service, between March 12 and 15, York County received 4 to 9 inches of rain, impacting already saturated roadbeds. In addition, high winds (strongest gusts of 48 mph observed at Sanford, York County) brought down limbs and trees. The immediate coast of Maine experienced strong winds, high tides 2 to 3 feet above astronomical levels and battering waves.

Again between March 22 and 24, 2 to 4 inches of rain fell across much of York, Cumberland, and Hancock Counties, and again, strong winds brought tree damage and debris, storm surge and damaging waves to coastal Maine.

Between March 28 and April 1, another surge of severe weather brought high winds, storm surge and heavy rains to southern and coastal Maine. During this period 3 to 6 inches of rain fell across much of York County, the midcoast region and Hancock County. Official wind gust measurements included 47 mph at Bar Harbor, in Hancock County. The strong and persistent east to northeast winds across coastal areas March 29th through 31st caused a storm surge to build up along the coast. Storm surges associated with the highest winds peaked at between 1 and 2 feet above the astronomical tides along the coast. In addition, the high winds generated large and powerful waves that caused erosion and other damage to the coast.

Tying all these periods of intensified storm activity together were the hydrologic conditions. As stated, USGS records confirm that stream flows in western and southern Maine were abnormally high preceding and during this incident period. USGS data shows stream flows peaking with each of these interim periods of heavy rains, but never falling even to near median levels. The antecedent conditions, coupled with the severe weather throughout the period created the disaster impact we have documented.

Across Maine, especially southern and western sections, this prolonged event has burdened communities, businesses and individuals with almost endless response, debris clearance, road closures, clean-up and repairs. The focus of this cycle of damage has been York County, which has suffered

continuous severe weather and flooding since the last week in February. However, the most severely damaged single site is the pier at Maine Maritime Academy, a State institution located in Castine, Hancock County. The pier is the home of the training ship "State of Maine," and therefore is the focal point of Maine Maritime's vital mission of training officers, engineers and mates for the nation's merchant fleet.

Because of the long-term nature of this event, citizens affected by high water in western Maine found resources to assist them locally, and shelters were not requested. Maine 211, a toll-free social service referral service, was very active during this period and remains active providing referrals to callers seeking help with flooded properties. Well over 100 individuals and business owners have called seeking assistance. The Small Business Administration has performed a site assessment and granted a Physical Injury declaration in York County for affected homes and businesses for the entire period of flooding beginning the last week in February.

In response to the situation, I have taken appropriate action under State law. Because of the continuing flooding risk, I directed the execution of the State Emergency Plan prior to March 12, 2010 in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act. The State Emergency Operations Center has been on alert or active since late February, and remained on alert or activated during this entire period.

During the extended response phase, I was able to make emergency assistance and response resources of State agencies available to local communities through my Executive authority. Therefore, while prepared to do so, I did not declare a State of Emergency during the period.

On April 13, 2010, I requested a joint Federal, State, and local Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) of the damaged areas. The PDA for public damage was conducted April 16 through 30, 2010. Town and state agency reports of damages, verified by the PDA, equate to over \$1.6 million, \$1.33 per capita statewide. Preliminary assessments show significant costs for debris clearance and emergency protective measures and severe impacts to roads, culverts and bridges in the affected counties, as well as the major damage at Maine Maritime Academy.

We believe that damage in several locations was reduced because of past mitigation efforts.

Thankfully, no deaths were reported during this period in Maine. However, the cost of this disaster falls on state and local budgets already adversely affected by a nationwide recession and further exhausted by the convergent effects of nine major disasters since May of 2006. Earlier this year, I requested and received a major disaster declaration for 5 counties for the period February 23rd through March 2nd (FEMA-DR-1891). York County was one of the counties covered in that declaration and those towns are burdened with repairing prior damage as well as recovery from this event. Hancock County also reported damages from that earlier event, but was not included in the declaration; therefore the budgets of those affected towns are bearing the entire recovery cost. Other Counties, whose aggregate damage numbers do not qualify them for assistance, nonetheless have small towns struggling with damage from both this and the prior event.

The State of Maine last year enacted a budget cutting \$500 million, including reduction of state subsidies to counties and towns, sacrifices of pay and benefits by state employees, mandatory shutdown days and other financial impacts on services to Maine people. As the recession continued I presented to this year's Legislative session a measure that further cut spending by more than \$400 million. Future road maintenance plans have had to be severely scaled back because of the downward spiral in the gas tax revenues which fund that maintenance.

These budget conditions at the state level are repeated at the municipal level, where towns are being forced to make difficult choices to allocate dwindling resources among funding priorities.

The crippling damages to Maine Maritime Academy must be addressed, and under current budget conditions and without supplementary Federal assistance, the resources to do so will have to be diverted from other vital services. Likewise, without assistance, the towns in York County, such as South Berwick which has incurred damages at a level of over \$45 per capita, will have to severely curtail other municipal services in order to address the damages from this prolonged event.

I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically requesting Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation and Small Business Administration assistance as applicable under the Public Assistance Program at this time for Hancock and York Counties. I intend to implement the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide. The State has a FEMA-approved Standard State Mitigation Plan in place.

In addition, I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b and 5173, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Preliminary estimates of the types and amount of assistance needed under the Stafford Act are tabulated in Enclosure B. Estimated requirements for assistance from certain Federal agencies under other statutory authorities are tabulated in Enclosure C.

State, local and private resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this disaster include: repairs to the Federal Aid Highway System and state highways, temporary repair assistance to local governments, repair to state roads and bridges and damage assessment by the Maine Department of Transportation; alerting, warning and traffic control by the Department of Public Safety, Department of Transportation and county and local public safety agencies; search and rescue assistance by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; emergency dam inspection by the Maine Emergency Management Agency; emergency assistance to private citizens by local responders and volunteer agencies; emergency coordination and damage assessment by the Department of Conservation, Maine Emergency Management Agency and affected County Emergency Management Agencies and assistance to affected families by social service and voluntary agencies.

I certify that for this major disaster, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act. Total State and local expenditures are expected to exceed \$422,000 in accordance with the table in Enclosure D.

I have designated Robert McAleer as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf.

Sincerely,

John Elias Baldacci

Governor

Governor Ceremonially Signs Universal Childhood Immunization Legislation

May 10, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate passage of LD 1408, “An Act to Establish the Universal Childhood Immunization Program.” The bill, sponsored by Rep. Gary Connor (D-Kennebunk), enhances access to quality health care for Maine children.

“This bill will ensure that more Maine children receive the full complement of recommended vaccinations, something that is critical to protect the health of all our State by preventing disease,” said Governor Baldacci. “I want to recognize Rep. Connor’s leadership as well as a coalition of health providers, consumers and insurance companies that worked for more than two years on this effort.”

“Through Dirigo Health Reform, we’ve established and expanded our public health system, leading to better coordination of care across the State,” the Governor said. “Earlier this year, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control named Maine one of the top states in the ability to vaccinate children against the H1N1 virus. As pleased as we are to receive this recognition, we know we will never be truly successful as a society unless we reach all our children and help prevent life-threatening diseases. The legislation we celebrate today is another important step to expanding access to quality health care and protecting our kids.”

Governor Celebrates Landmark Energy Legislation

May 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today recognized the Maine Legislature and the many public and private partners that worked to further Maine's aggressive goals to achieve energy independence. He ceremonially signed five bills that take critical next steps to achieve these clean energy goals.

"Maine's energy, environment and economic landscape will be improved for generations to come, and Maine people will benefit by being healthier and more economically secure thanks to your support of green energy development," said Governor Baldacci. "For far too long we've been dependent on fossil fuels to heat our homes, power our industries and transport goods and people. Together, we are pursuing clean, renewable, home-grown energy that will enable us to kick the oil habit."

The Governor ceremonially signed five key pieces of energy legislation:

- LD 1786, "An act Regarding Energy Infrastructure Development"
- LD 1535, "An Act to Create a Smart Grid Policy in the State"
- LD 1717, "An Act to Increase the Affordability of Clean Energy for Homeowners and Businesses"
- LD 1504, "An Act to Provide Predictable Benefits to Maine Communities That Host Wind Energy Developments"
- LD 1810, "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Governor's Ocean Energy Task Force"

Governor Baldacci said that Maine has been a leader in demonstrating energy efficiency, weatherization and development of renewable energy.

Since 2003, Maine State government has modeled various energy efficiency efforts and used green energy to heat buildings. In the last year, Maine obtained significant opportunities for residential weatherization and business and industrial energy efficiency as a result of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative funds and federal Recovery Act funding.

Last year, the Legislature passed the Governor's comprehensive energy package that established the goal to weatherize all residences and 50 percent of businesses by 2030 and reduce the State's consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030. The State has also established a goal of 3000 megawatts of wind energy by 2020 and put all energy efficiency programs together under one roof.

LD 1786, "An act Regarding Energy Infrastructure Development," the energy corridor legislation, is a major step forward in ensuring a reliable energy infrastructure and process for its use. It calls for the designated corridors to be used only if likely to reduce electric rates and otherwise benefit the long-term public interest of the State, including not adversely impacting renewable energy generation in

Maine. The revenues from the use of State assets are also directed to improve energy efficiency and renewable energy, including alternative transportation.

Building on the infrastructure reliability is the bill LD 1535, "An Act to Create a Smart Grid Policy in the State." The bill will ensure that all Maine ratepayers benefit from smart grid technology that saves energy, increases reliability, reduces costs and provides consumers with more options. This bill gets Maine ready for a future where we can utilize electric storage and peak-reduction strategies including plug-in electric and hybrid electric vehicles in a sophisticated and energy-efficient manner.

LD 1717, "An Act to Increase the Affordability of Clean Energy for Homeowners and Businesses," helps Maine property owners make affordable energy efficiency upgrades to their homes and businesses. Maine towns and cities can establish a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program to assist property owners with the up-front costs of weatherization and efficiency upgrades that often prevent them from making such improvements. This legislation complements the recent award from the U.S. Department of Energy of \$30 million to Maine for a Retrofit Ramp-up program that will help to aggressively weatherize Maine's older housing stock in a way that works for Maine people.

The bill LD 1504, "An Act to Provide Predictable Benefits to Maine Communities That Host Wind Energy Developments," clarifies that as we seek to aggressively pursue wind power in Maine, that minimum benefits to ratepayers in host communities are demonstrated. As part of a permit application, expedited wind energy development projects must demonstrate a community benefits package valued at no less than \$4000 per year per wind turbine, in addition to property tax benefits and jobs created by the project.

LD 1810, based on the recommendations of the Ocean Energy Task Force, advances development of Maine's vast renewable ocean energy resource as quickly as possible, yet in an environmentally responsible way. The bill establishes a State goal of 5 gigawatts of energy generation from facilities located in coastal waters by 2030. A competitive process will be conducted by the Maine Public Utilities Commission for long-term contracting from one or more deep-water offshore wind energy pilot projects up to 25 Megawatts or tidal demonstration projects up to 5 Megawatts. The bill enacts a clear permitting system for projects in State waters and clarifies leasing of submerged lands for ocean energy projects.

The Governor said this legislative success also complements the June bond question that would provide \$11 million for research and development of ocean wind demonstration sites and wind energy components manufacturing in Maine.

"Our success is built on innovative leadership and public-private partnerships," said Governor Baldacci. "We can also take pride in the fact that we in Maine recognize the issue of a clean energy future is not a partisan one. I am hopeful that in Maine, we will continue to take the opportunity to work together, because when we do, Maine people benefit."

For more information on the energy legislation passed in this Legislative session, visit <http://www.maine.gov/legis>

Governor Mourns Passing of John F. Conley

May 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement after learning of the death of John “Jay” F. Conley, who died unexpectedly this morning.

Conley was a partner in the accounting firm Blake Hurley McCallum & Conley in Westbrook. He served on the Board of Directors of the Finance Authority of Maine for six years, from 2004 to 2010.

“Jay was a friend and given a lot to his State through his service on the FAME Board,” Governor Baldacci said. “I am deeply saddened to hear of his passing and my thoughts and prayers go out to his family during this difficult time.”

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Sunday, May 16

May 13, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Spc. Wade A. Slack, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Sunday, May 16, 2010.

Spc. Slack, died May 6, while serving in Afghanistan. He was with the U.S. Army's 707th Ordnance Battalion from Fort Lewis, Washington. Spc. Slack's mother and father live in Waterville.

The funeral service for Spc. Slack is planned for Sunday, May 16 at Blessed Hope Church, in Waterville.

Governor Ceremonially Signs Consumer Protection Legislation

May 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held a State House ceremony today to celebrate passage of LD 1256, "An Act To Provide Protections for Consumers Subject to Mandatory Arbitration Clauses."

The law, sponsored by Rep. Sean Flaherty (D-Scarborough), limits the use of consumer arbitration agreements in the State as well as ensures that consumers have full information, including estimated expenses, about such agreements.

"In Maine, as in other states, we have heard concerns about the growth of mandatory arbitration when it comes to consumer contracts," said Governor Baldacci. "The Maine Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection has been monitoring the growth in financial services companies' use of such contracts, which often restrict consumers from using the courts to resolve issues with companies."

Governor Names State Budget Officer as Acting Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services

May 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced today that he will name Ellen Schneider as the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

Schneider, currently the State Budget Officer, will replace Commissioner Ryan Low, who will leave the Department on June 30.

“Ellen has been instrumental in the work of the Department and this Administration,” Governor Baldacci said. “She has managed the budget process during the worst recession since the Great Depression, and has proven her ability to lead. She will bring tremendous experience and institutional knowledge to her new position, and has earned the respect of her colleagues within the Administration and the Legislature.”

Schneider has served as the State Budget Officer since 2006. She has also served as the Associate Commissioner of DAFS and the Deputy Director of the Governor’s Office of Health Policy and Finance. Before joining State government, Schneider was the Senior Manager at Health Dialog, a consulting service focusing on health care quality improvement. In addition, she has been the Associate Director and the Acting Director of the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation and Executive Director of the Maine Health Care Reform Commission.

Schneider has a master’s degree from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University. For two years, she was a research associate at the University of Southern Maine.

Low has accepted a position as the Vice President for Administration at the University of Maine Farmington.

Governor Baldacci will nominate Schneider for confirmation as the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. The nomination will be considered by the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and during a State Senate confirmation session later this year. The date of the session has not been determined.

Governor's Statement on Upcoming Visit from U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu

May 26, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned during a phone call from Senator Susan Collins that United States Department of Energy Secretary Steven Chu will be visiting the University of Maine's Advanced Engineered Wood Composites Center on June 14.

"I am pleased that Secretary Chu will see firsthand the groundbreaking work on alternative energy being conducted by Dr. Habib Dagher and the other scientists at the Center," said Governor Baldacci. "The federal government has been very supportive of the deepwater wind project, and has been a real partner in Maine's efforts to develop a more stable and secure energy supply that is renewable and will create jobs here in Maine."

"I'm proud of the aggressive steps we have taken in Maine to show what is possible," said the Governor. "Maine is particularly well-placed to be a leader in offshore wind energy generation due to favorable geography, broad-based support including public-private partnerships and the technological and workforce strengths that the State has built."

Secretary Chu was invited to the facility by Senator Collins.

"I appreciate the work of Senator Collins and the other members of the Maine Congressional delegation - Senator Snowe, Representative Michaud and Representative Pingree - for their steadfast support of Maine's efforts to develop renewable energy," said the Governor.

The Governor met with the President and Secretary Chu in Washington, D.C., in February to discuss wind energy.

The June visit will be the second by a federal Cabinet member made to the Advanced Engineered Wood Composites Center in the past year. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood visited the Center in August 2009.

Governor Holds Bill Signing Ceremonies

May 26, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held State House ceremonies today to celebrate four pieces of legislation that passed the State Legislature this session. Each bill had been signed into law earlier in the year.

The bills that had signing ceremonies today include:

LD 1565, "An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Misclassification of Construction Workers." Sponsored by Rep. John Martin (D-Eagle Lake), the bill gives the Workers' Compensation Board the ability to put a stop-work order on a business that knowingly misclassifies construction employees.

LD 1626, "An Act To Amend the Unemployment Compensation Laws Regarding Vacation Pay," sponsored by House Speaker Hannah Pingree (D-North Haven). The bill removes an offset on unemployment benefits for laid-off workers owed vacation pay from their former employer.

LD 1548, "Resolve, To Prevent the Spread of Invasive Plants and Protect Maine's Lakes." This bill, sponsored by Rep. Jane Eberle (D-South Portland), expands the collection of data and other information on infestations of invasive plants on Maine lakes by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. It calls for increased educational outreach by both departments to the public, especially to those who use Maine lakes for recreational purposes and for water extraction.

LD 20, "An Act To Require Insurance Companies To Cover the Cost of Prosthetics Containing Microprocessors." The bill, sponsored by Rep. Mark Bryant (D-Windham), mandates health coverage of prosthetic devices that use microprocessors. Maine is one of 11 states in the country with mandated coverage for prosthetics, but before this bill was the only one of those 11 states that specifically excluded this type of prosthetics.

For more information on these bills, visit <http://www.maine.gov/legis>

State Agencies Closed Friday and Monday, May 28th and 31st

May 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, May 28, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

In addition, State government offices are closed for the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 31.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, May 28, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part
SSS: http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the last of 10 closure days between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2010.

There are 10 State government closure days in the next Fiscal Year (FY 2011), which begins July 1, 2010.

The 10 closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Friday, July 2, 2010

Friday, August 6, 2010

Friday, September 3, 2010

Friday, October 8, 2010

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Federal Department of Energy Recognizes Maine's Leadership to Weatherize Homes

May 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – The federal government praised the State of Maine today for achieving initial weatherization goals through federal Recovery Act funds. Governor John E. Baldacci was joined in a conference call this morning by U.S. Department of Energy Assistant Secretary of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Cathy Zoi for the announcement. According to Assistant Secretary Zoi, Maine is one of the country's weatherization leaders and has now weatherized more than 30 percent of their total targeted homes.

"Conservation is the most cost-effective way to reduce our dependence on oil. By investing in weatherization, we help families keep more of their hard-earned money, we create good jobs and we reduce the amount of pollution in our environment," Governor John E. Baldacci said. "Investments from the Recovery Act have made a significant difference to our State, and through the low-income weatherization program administered by Maine Housing it is helping thousands of people save money."

Through the Weatherization Assistance Program, Maine has weatherized 1,582 low-income homes under the Recovery Act as of April 30, 2010. The program partners MaineHousing with local nonprofits and community action agencies to conduct energy audits and identify cost-effective improvements to the homes, saving families an average of \$437 on their energy bills every year.

The Weatherization Assistance Program is also creating jobs throughout the State. MaineHousing says that more than 160 workers were employed by weatherization providers during the first three months of 2010.

"What we see here today is that states like Maine are moving forward aggressively with the weatherization program, delivering energy and cost savings for the families who need it most," said U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "This Recovery Act funding is helping to create jobs in local communities while putting America on the path to a clean energy future."

With the plan to weatherize a total of more than 4,400 homes, Maine was allocated \$41.9 million for the weatherization program under the Recovery Act. The State previously had access to the first 50 percent of the funding. By weatherizing more than 30 percent of total estimated homes, Maine can now access the full \$41.9 million to continue weatherizing homes.

Since February 2009, Maine has also weatherized 1,100 additional homes under the State's annual weatherization program. Together with the Recovery Act funding, the state has now weatherized more than 2,680 homes since the Recovery Act began. Cost-effective energy improvements in homes includes installing items such as insulation and weatherstripping, sealing windows and doors, caulking cracks in the building, and replacing inefficient heating and cooling systems.

“As a State that has among the oldest housing in the country, has one of the coldest climates, and is more dependent on imported heating oil than many other states, we are aware of the tremendous need to make our housing more energy efficient,” said Governor Baldacci. “That is why Maine has taken a leading role in weatherization, evidenced by our commitment to weatherize all the homes in Maine and half of the businesses by 2030. We are off to a good start.”

The State’s weatherization program is also looking at expanding the program and raising additional funding to enable the state to weatherize even more homes. This includes a plan to generate additional funds by selling carbon emission offsets from the homes weatherized under the Recovery Act.

Governor Baldacci's Statement on Memorial Day

May 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci issued the following statement today on Memorial Day, observed Monday, May 31.

“As we enjoy this spring weekend with family and friends, I hope everyone will join me in paying tribute to the men and women who have served in our military. On Memorial Day, we remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while wearing the uniform of the United States of America. They have kept us safe and protected the values that make our country great. We will never forget their sacrifice, and the sacrifice of those close to them.”

“And we also hold close in our hearts the men and women who are serving in Afghanistan, Iraq and around the world. We are proud of their service and look forward to their safe return home. They are giving of themselves for all of us. They have earned our respect and our support, while they are away and when they return home.”

“On Memorial Day, flags will be lowered around Maine until Noon, in honor and tribute to America's fallen soldiers. Then the flags will be raised to the top of the staff until sunset, in honor of our country's war heroes.”

“Maine is thankful to our heroes past and present. Time and time again, our soldiers have answered the call and stood ready to support the defense of our families, communities and country. So on this day, we remember them, we pray for them, and we pray for their families.”

Governor Holds Three Bill Signing Ceremonies

May 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held State House ceremonies today to celebrate three pieces of legislation that passed the State Legislature this session. Each bill had been signed into law earlier in the year.

The bills that had signing ceremonies today include:

LD 1730, “An Act To Strengthen the Ballot Initiative Process.” Sponsored by Senator John Nutting (D-Androscoggin), the law strengthens the certification process of petitions for ballot initiatives. In addition, in cases where an organization is paid to gather signatures, they must register with the Secretary of State. Volunteer signature gatherers would not be affected.

LD 1503, “An Act To Establish Emergency Zones on Public Ways To Minimize Accidents,” was sponsored by Senator David Trahan (R-Lincoln). The law requires drivers to drive at prudent speeds at an area of roadway at which there is an emergency vehicle with emergency lights on. The law sets the fines for violations of this act at \$250 minimum.

LD 1598, “An Act To Strengthen the Laws against Cruelty to Animals.” This law, sponsored by Senator Deborah Simpson (D-Androscoggin), allows for expedited court hearings when an animal is seized by a State humane agent or State veterinarian. The legislation also enables the court to make the defendant pay the costs of relocating an animal, and the reinstates probation for Class D animal cruelty violations.

For more information on these bills, visit <http://www.maine.gov/legis>

Governor Holds Bill Signing Ceremonies for Three Bills Sponsored by Senator Alfond

June 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci held State House ceremonies today to celebrate three pieces of legislation that passed the State Legislature this session that were sponsored by Senator Justin Alfond (D-Cumberland).

The bills that had signing ceremonies today include:

LD 1679, “An Act To Create Jobs and Stimulate Economic Development by Making Captive Insurers Eligible for Pine Tree Development Zone Benefits. Since 2004, 278 businesses have been Pine Tree Zone certified with nearly 8,000 anticipated new jobs and \$673 million in planned investment that would not have occurred otherwise. The new law enables the State to do more by ensuring that captive insurance companies are eligible entities for Pine Tree Zone participation.

LD 1658, “An Act To Increase Maine’s High School Graduation Rates.” The law requires the Department of Education to work with schools that are having difficulty by the end of the 2012-2013 school year reaching the 80 percent mark of graduating seniors. The law also requires the Department of Education and the State Board of Education to establish a stakeholder group to recommend ways we can increase high school graduation rates.

LD 1773, “An Act To Improve Dental Insurance Coverage for Maine Children,” continues Maine’s leadership in providing health care access for Maine residents. The law removes restrictions for when a child could be eligible for enrollment in dental coverage. Under the new law, a parent will be able to elect dental coverage for their child at birth or during open and annual enrollment periods.

For more information on these bills, visit <http://www.maine.gov/legis>

Governor Celebrates Midcoast Campus, Highlights Importance of Question 4 on June Ballot

June 1, 2010

SOUTH PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined officials from Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) and the University of Maine, as well as Brunswick-area State legislators and business representatives from the Midcoast to celebrate the Midcoast Campus, which will be housed at the current Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS). The Governor also spoke to the importance of passage of Question 4 on the June ballot, which would – among other critical investments – include \$4.75 million to renovate buildings at BNAS for the Midcoast Campus.

“The Midcoast Campus will create opportunities for Mainers now and into the future, offering students degrees in engineering and focusing on Maine’s strengths - boatbuilding, composites and engineering among them,” said Governor Baldacci. “The campus, a partnership between Southern Maine Community College and the University of Maine, will focus on high-demand, high-growth fields of study – training people for the kind of jobs Maine wants and needs.”

The Center will offer students a seamless path to associate, bachelor’s and master’s degree programs. SMCC officials project that 2,000 students will be able to enroll at the Campus.

“The work going on at the Campus will be a magnet, attracting private-sector companies interested in research and development, particularly in composites, precision manufacturing, engineering and advanced energy technology,” said the Governor. “This work will help Maine develop and grow its alternative energy sector. That means safe, renewable and close to home, this exciting resource will lead to new opportunities for Maine and thousands of jobs for Maine people.”

The Governor said that Question 4 on the June 8 ballot is critical to moving the Midcoast Campus forward. Question 4 is a \$23.75 million jobs and investments bond. Of this amount, \$4.75 million would go to the renovation of the buildings for the Midcoast Campus.

“Question 4 also contains support for traditional industries in Maine and for small businesses,” said the Governor. “This is the time to make these investments, building our foundation for economic and job growth. I hope Mainers will support Question 4 and the key investments it makes in our people.”

Governor Unveils New Investment Initiative

June 3, 2010

ROCKPORT – Governor John E. Baldacci today unveiled a new Foreign Direct Investment initiative at the 30th Maine International Trade Day event held at the Samoset Resort.

The initiative will focus on increasing investments in Maine's renewable energy and advanced materials fields, enhancing Maine's capacity to be a center of excellence in wind energy, composites and advanced materials. The initiative will attract investments in business and R&D, further strengthening Maine's internationally active, exporting companies and supporting the State's universities.

"We have an exciting opportunity in Maine to build on our core strengths in the renewable energy and composites technologies sectors," said Governor Baldacci. "The trade mission I led last year to Germany and Spain emphasized and reinforced that Maine as a desirable place to invest in the energy sector. Europe showed a lot of interest in Maine in these fields, and several investment groups have visited Maine since last September as a result of the mission. The Direct Foreign Investment initiative builds on this momentum."

The Maine International Trade Center (MITC) will manage the program, which will include:

- Increasing outreach in international markets through trade shows, trade missions and investment seminars in targeted areas;
- Developing international relationships in the renewable and advanced materials areas; and
- Hiring a Foreign Investment Attaché to work on targeted markets in Europe and Asia to bring foreign investment and joint ventures into the State of Maine.

The Governor said that supporting foreign investment in Maine's key energy and composites sectors will help Maine achieve numerous goals. "Supporting clean energy development will not only keep money here at home where it can be put to work for Maine people, but it will grow opportunities for Maine businesses and lead to thousands of new, good paying jobs," said the Governor. "I am excited about a focused Foreign Direct Investment initiative and the potential we have to rapidly expand our ability to attract business in these areas."

The Governor specifically thanked the Maine International Trade Center and the support of a core group of private sector companies including Tex Tech and its CEO Ciaran Lynch, public sector agencies led by Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development and the Maine Technology Institute's Cluster Initiative Program.

The Governor and MITC released updated trade figures for the State. Overall, and mirroring national trends, 2009 saw a decrease in trade. \$2.2 billion of products were exported from Maine in 2009 (down 24 percent after four years steady growth).

This year's exports are faring better, with figures up 20 percent in the first quarter of 2010. Especially strong are the pulp and paper industries (up 200 percent and 72 percent, respectively). Semiconductor exports have also shown improvements this year (up 23 percent) and are expected to rebound. Maine is also diversifying its base of products being exported with shipments to more than 167 countries worldwide.

Trade missions last year were also successful. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, Maine companies participating in the European Energy Mission and Trade Shows in Vietnam, Dubai and Germany reported more than \$23 million in export sales – an all-time record.

In 2009, \$148 billion was invested in the U.S. by foreign companies, and 5.5 million American workers are employed by foreign firms. In Maine, more than 24,000 workers are employed by foreign companies, with \$6.2 billion invested in property and equipment.

State Health Plan Public Hearings to Take Place Wednesday, June 9

June 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – The 2010-2012 Maine State Health Plan will be the subject of public hearings to be held June 9, 2010, in Portland and Augusta. By law, the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance is required to submit a State Health Plan every two years with review and advice from the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development. The hearings will provide an important opportunity for public input before a final State Health Plan is released July 1.

Public hearings will be held:

Portland, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., June 9

USM, Wishcamper Campus

Muskie School of Public Service

34 Bedford St.

Lee Community Hall, Room 103

Augusta, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., June 9

Cross State Office Building

Corner of Capitol and Sewall Streets

Room 209

Written comments will be accepted through 5 p.m. on June 18, 2010. All comments are to be directed to Laurie Halligan, Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, 15 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333. Phone: 207.624.7442; Fax: 207.624.7608.

The State Health Plan is a roadmap to help Maine become the healthiest state with an integrated, high performing health care system that is accessible and affordable to everyone. It's an action plan for all the State.

This year's plan is focused on lowering costs by:

- Improving the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the health care system by strengthening public health and prevention;
- Reducing inefficient practices and waste;
- Paying for what matters and paying focused attention on the workforce and data needs;

- Assuring Maine has the capacity to exchange information efficiently and effectively about patient clinical needs; and
- Maine has the health care resources it needs and can afford.

Trish Riley, the Director of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, said, "This year's State Health Plan is a transition document. It contains an important chapter on implementing federal health reform. The draft plan lays out the challenges and opportunities for the State of Maine to implement the federal Affordable Care Act."

Riley said that an innovative new approach in the plan creates incentives for health care providers to reduce inefficient practices and increase collaboration.

The Advisory Council on Health Systems Development is a 20-member group created by the Legislature and appointed by the Governor with legislative review representing a broad array of stakeholders.

To review the draft State Health Plan,
visit http://www.maine.gov/governor/baldacci/cabinet/health_policy.html

Maine Recognized as National Leader in Weatherization

June 7, 2010

FAIRFIELD – U.S. Department of Energy officials met with Governor John E. Baldacci today to recognize the local, State, nonprofit and education partners in their successful efforts to make energy efficiency improvements to Maine homes. With federal support, the State of Maine has been taking steps to achieve ambitious energy efficiency and energy independence goals.

“Maine is in the process of realizing our commitment to improve the energy efficiency of 100 percent of homes and half of businesses by 2030,” said Governor Baldacci. “We know our goals in Maine are ambitious, but we also know what is at stake.”

The Governor said, “We have some of the oldest housing in the country. We have one of the coldest climates. And we are dependent on imported heating oil. Maine residents and businesses can not afford to pay such substantial resources for fossil fuels that are insecure, expensive, contribute to global warming, and often come from countries that are hostile to American interests.”

Recent awards by the federal Department of Energy are enabling the State to create home energy savings, jobs and significantly reduce carbon emissions through the State’s building retrofit industry.

Maine is one of the states that achieved the Department of Energy’s 30 percent goal to weatherize homes, enabling the State to receive the full \$41.9 million in weatherization funding established under the federal Recovery Act. The Governor said that MaineHousing’s long experience with the Department’s Weatherization Assistance Program and the partnerships it has established with the State’s Community Action Agencies were key factors in helping the State achieve that goal.

The U.S. Department of Energy has provided additional key funds to help Maine. In the spring, Maine was awarded \$30 million through the Ramp-Up initiative, among the largest in the country. That award enabled the State to kick-start its PACE initiative to help Maine property owners to make affordable energy efficiency upgrades to their homes and businesses.

In addition, on Friday the U.S. Department of Energy provided \$880,000 of Recovery Act funds to enable Maine to grow our weatherization training programs. The State partners with community colleges to train new and existing weatherization auditors and technicians.

“This is an important part of Maine’s weatherization programs: growing jobs,” said Governor Baldacci.

The Governor was joined today by Gil Sperling, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy; John Kerry, Director of Maine’s Office of Energy Independence and Security; Dale McCormick, Director of MaineHousing; Michael Stoddard, Executive Director of the Efficiency Maine Trust; and representatives of Kennebec Valley Community College and the Kennebec Valley Community Action Agency.

The Governor recognized the support from these and other groups working toward energy independence, saying, "Our partners are why Maine is taking a leading role in making our homes and businesses more energy efficient. The hard work of these partners, including the Maine State Legislature and Maine's Congressional delegation, is critical as we build a greener, more energy efficient future that benefits Maine families and our economy."

PUC Chairwoman to Step Down in July

June 11, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced today that Sharon Reishus is stepping down as the chairwoman of the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

"Sharon has been a strong chairwoman for the Commission as it has considered some of the largest and most complicated infrastructure projects in Maine history," Governor Baldacci said. "She has been steadfast in defending the public interest, and expanding efforts to help businesses and consumers conserve electricity."

During Reishus' tenure, the Commission considered significant telecommunications, electric and natural gas utility cases that will have a lasting impact on Maine. In addition, Efficiency Maine, the energy efficiency program of the Commission, has expanded to better serve families and businesses, providing grants that have helped companies protect jobs and grow in Maine.

"Maine has been well-served by Sharon," Governor Baldacci said. "She has treated people fairly while also working hard to protect Maine families and businesses."

Reishus has been a national leader on energy issues, representing Maine at the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, Eastern Interconnection State Planning Council (EISPC), and New England State Committee on Electricity (NESCOE). She is the past president of the New England Conference of Public Utility Commissioners (NECPUC).

As chairwoman, Reishus also led an internal reorganization of the staff to increase efficiency and effectiveness, transition to a new building in Hallowell, and facilitating the transition of the Commission's Energy Division programs to the newly independent Efficiency Maine Trust.

Reishus will step down on July 12. Commissioner Jack Cashman will be named Acting Commission Chairman.

The Governor said he intends to nominate a new PUC Commissioner for consideration by the Legislature during a confirmation Special Session, which will likely be held later this summer.

Reishus was appointed Commissioner in July 2003 and appointed Chairwoman in May 2008. Before joining the Commission, Reishus was Director, North American Power, for the Cambridge Energy Research Associates. She was a staff analyst at the Commission from 1991 to 1998. She has also worked for Central Maine Power Company and for the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C.

Cashman was appointed to the Commission in August 2008. He has served as the Senior Economic Adviser to the Governor and as the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development. He served in the Maine House of Representatives from 1982 to 1992 and the Old Town City Council from 1977 to 1983.

U.S. Energy Secretary Visits Maine

June 14, 2010

ORONO – Governor John E. Baldacci today welcomed U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Steven Chu to the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center. Secretary Chu had been invited to the facility by U.S. Senator Susan Collins. The federal agency has provided key funding to the Center and partners to aid Maine's efforts to aggressively pursue wind power development and green jobs.

"Maine is a national leader in the development of clean, renewable and home-grown energy," said Governor Baldacci. "Secretary Chu's visit recognizes the intense commitment and broad-based support behind renewable energy development in Maine. We've worked hard to build the technological and workforce strengths that have put Maine on this path."

The Governor pointed to the steadfast support of Maine's Congressional Delegation, which has helped the State position itself as a national leader in wind energy development. The Obama Administration has provided more than \$25 million dollars in grants to help develop offshore energy.

Governor Baldacci said that public support for clean energy was reinforced in last week's ballot with about 60 percent of Maine voters supporting the bond question that included, among other energy priorities, \$11 million to support the development of the deepwater wind energy demonstration site spearheaded by University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center.

"Maine people recognize the economic, national security and environmental dangers in reliance on foreign fossil fuels to heat our homes and power our cars," said the Governor. "And they are supporting the work going on today that will create thousands of new jobs, and translate into a cleaner, safer power, putting our State in control of our energy future."

Maine last week joined with nine other states and the U.S. Department of Interior to establish The Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium to work to streamline the review and siting process for offshore wind projects in federal waters. Maine has already identified three demonstration sites for offshore wind technology located in Maine coastal waters. The University of Maine will be using a site off Monhegan Island for its testing.

Maine has established a bold vision of reducing the State's consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030.

The Secretary's visit follows one a week ago by other U.S. Department of Energy officials, who came to the State to recognize energy efficiency improvements being made to Maine homes.

Secretary Chu's visit is the second by a federal Cabinet member made to the Advanced Engineered Wood Composites Center in the past year. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood visited the Center in August 2009.

Governor Baldacci Creates Working Group to Consider Laws Regarding ATV Use on Private Property

June 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed an Executive Order creating the ATV Stop Work Group.

The purpose of the work group is to gather information about the controversial issue of law enforcement stops of ATV riders on private property and develop recommendations and a draft enforcement policy for how to promote safety, protect private property and ensure that any stops of ATV riders are done in accordance with constitutional protections.

“This is a difficult issue with legitimate concerns on both sides,” Governor Baldacci said. “The goal of this working group is to protect landowner rights and access for ATV riders while also balancing privacy concerns and the obligations of law enforcement officers on private property.”

Maine law requires that a person must have the permission of the landowner to operate an all-terrain vehicle on private property, except when there is a conspicuously posted ATV trail or in areas open to use by landowner policy.

For many years, Maine law authorized law enforcement officers to stop and examine any all-terrain vehicle to ascertain whether it was being operated in compliance with certain laws and requirements without reasonable articulable suspicion that a violation had occurred.

The 124th Maine Legislature established a new standard governing ATV stops, restricting the ability of law enforcement officers to stop ATV operators.

While some ATV riders and landowners approve of the new standard, there is concern that other landowners will restrict access to their property because law enforcement officers are no longer authorized to proactively address safety and landowner relations issues.

The text of the Executive Order follows:

15 FY 10/11

June 15, 2010

An Executive Order Establishing the Work Group to Review Standards by Which State Law Enforcement Officers May Stop All-Terrain Vehicles

WHEREAS, the operation of all-terrain vehicles (“ATV”) in the State of Maine is a highly regulated activity; and

WHEREAS, in response to recommendations from the Governor's ATV Task Force created in May 2003, the Legislature implemented mandatory penalties for certain violations and mandatory suspensions of all licenses, permits and regulations; and

WHEREAS, Maine law requires that a person may not operate an all-terrain vehicle on the land of another without the permission of the landowner or lessee with the exception that permission is presumed on ATV trails that are conspicuously posted or in areas open to ATV use by landowner policy; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Warden Service under Title 12 MRSA Section 10353 and all other law enforcement officers under Title 12 MRSA Section 10401 are authorized to enforce ATV laws; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Maine law authorized game wardens to stop and examine any all-terrain vehicle to ascertain whether it was being operated in compliance with certain laws and requirements without reasonable articulable suspicion that a violation has occurred or is occurring ("old ATV stop standard") (Title 12 M.R.S.A. section 10353(2)(G)); and

WHEREAS, the Maine Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the old ATV stop standard in *State v. McKeen*, 2009 ME 87, 977 A.2d 382; and

WHEREAS, the 124th Maine Legislature established a new standard ("new ATV stop standard") governing the circumstances under which a law enforcement officer may stop an ATV that requires an officer to possess a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a violation has occurred or is occurring before conducting a stop (Title 12 MRSA Section 10353(2)(G) (2008)); and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers are concerned that the new ATV stop standard does not provide authority to a law enforcement officer to stop an ATV on private land for a safety or land use impact concern or to prevent a violation from occurring; and

WHEREAS, some landowners and ATV riders are concerned that law enforcement officers are no longer authorized to proactively address safety and landowner relations issues and worry that without adequate prevention measures, inadequately regulated uses of ATVs puts access to private property for recreational use at risk; and

WHEREAS, some landowners and ATV riders approve of the new ATV stop standard that requires a reasonable and articulable suspicion to believe that a violation of law has taken place or is taking place prior to stopping an ATV on private land based on privacy and constitutional concerns; and

WHEREAS, strong views on this matter continue to generate conflict, uncertainty and threaten ATV access to certain private lands;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish the ATV Stop Work Group (hereinafter "Work Group").

Purpose and Duties

Clarify the concerns of landowners regarding the new ATV stop standard and law enforcement response to that standard;

Identify the constraints placed on law enforcement officers regarding safety and prevention of violations under the new ATV stop standard;

Articulate the strengths of the new ATV stop standard for landowners riding ATVs on their own property;

Develop recommendations and draft enforcement policy that addresses numbers 1 through 3 above; and

Draft any necessary legislation to address recommendations developed by the Work Group.

Membership

The Governor shall appoint eleven members to serve on the Work Group, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Membership is as follows:

Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife or the Commissioner's designee

Colonel of the Maine Game Warden Service

Director of Landowner Relations under the Departments of Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or the Commissioner's designee

Three members shall include representatives of landowners including farms, forests and woodlots bringing interests of smaller and larger ownerships with geographic representation

Two members shall include representatives of ATV recreational associations or businesses

One member shall be an attorney with knowledge of constitutional law

One member shall be a citizen who has familiarity with the issues concerning ATV use in Maine

The President of the Senate may appoint two members of the Senate and the Speaker of the House may appoint three members of the House of Representatives. Members appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority.

The Governor shall appoint a chair of the Work Group from among the members. The chair will schedule and set the agenda for, and preside at the Work Group meetings. The members of the Work Group shall serve without compensation.

Staff

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation through the Bureau of Parks and Lands shall provide staff to the Work Group. At the request of the Work Group, other state agencies shall provide information and analysis to assist the Work Group in its deliberations.

Report

The Work Group shall prepare a written report to the Governor outlining its findings and recommendations no later than December 15, 2010.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is June 15, 2010.

Maine Workers' Compensation Reduces Assessments on Businesses

June 16, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci and the Executive Director of Maine Workers' Compensation Board, Paul R. Dionne, announced that the Workers' Compensation Board recently approved the largest reduction in the assessment to employers since 1993.

The action reduced the assessment which funds the Agency from \$10.8 million to \$7.35 million for a total reduction of \$3.45 million. This was accomplished through the following measures: a transfer from the Rehabilitation Fund of more than \$1.1 million; salary savings from vacancies and shutdown days of \$675,000; audits from prior fiscal years of \$1.6 million; and miscellaneous savings of \$60,000. The Board approved the recommendation by a vote of 5-0.

This is the second year in a row that the Workers' Compensation Board has submitted record breaking reductions. Last year the Workers' Compensation Board announced a \$3 million reduction.

"A key goal of my Administration during these challenging economic times has been to reduce the costs and burdens on Maine businesses," said Governor Baldacci. "Working with the Maine Workers' Compensation Board and the Maine Legislature, we have been successful in keeping more valuable resources in the hands of businesses by reducing the workers' compensation assessment to employers of the State. This serves as a stimulus package to the Maine economy."

"The reduction in workers' compensation assessment of is a direct benefit to employers of the State, and should have a powerful effect on the Maine economy," said Maine Workers' Compensation Board Executive Director Dionne. "Overall, compensation rates have dropped 54 percent since 1993. These decreases have contributed to one of the more stable workers' compensation systems in the country."

Governor Recognizes Students for Promoting Clean Water

June 16, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today presented awards to the three student winners of the Maine Clean Water Week Poster Contest. The contest, sponsored by the nonprofit Maine Wastewater Control Association, is part of raising public awareness of improvements made in the quality of Maine's waterways. Clean Water Week was June 6 – 12.

The Governor congratulated the students, all three of whom are 7th graders from Central Middle School in Stetson. "I am proud that you have put so much work into your posters and in getting the message out to everyone in the State about the importance of preserving our lakes and rivers and keeping our water supply clean."

The winners are:

1st place: Kailey Buswell

2nd place: Elsie Ann Chambers

3rd place: Tiffany Eldridge

The winners received cash prizes and as the winning student's school, Central Middle School received a television monitor, DVD and education tapes.

The Maine Wastewater Control Association sponsors the competition for Maine students in grades 3 through 8 each year.

Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties

June 22, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Sgt. Brandon Silk, 25, of Orono was killed Monday while serving with the 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan. Sgt. Silk was a Black Hawk crew chief, stationed in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, according to his family.

“The death of a soldier is a terrible tragedy for family, friends and the entire community. A hole is opened in many lives,” Governor Baldacci said. “The men and women who serve in the military have earned our respect and our gratitude. During this very difficult time, we will keep Sgt. Silk’s family and friends in our thoughts and in our prayers.”

Governor Baldacci spoke with Sgt. Silk’s family earlier today.

“In Maine, we’re all an extended family,” Governor Baldacci said. “At times like these, we have to reach out and take care of one another. Sgt. Silk was a hero, and we will honor his life and his sacrifice.”

The family has asked for privacy as they cope with the loss of their son.

Governor Baldacci will order flags lowered to half-staff on the day of Sgt. Silk’s funeral.

No additional information is available at this time.

Governor Recognizes Model Logging Certification Initiative

June 22, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today recognized the most recent Master Logger Certification recipients. At a Blaine House ceremony, the Governor said that the Northeast Master Logger Certification Program has been a groundbreaking initiative and another sign of Maine's leadership and commitment to the logging industry and the communities it supports.

"Companies who depend on paper products, whether through catalogue sales or publications, want to know that the paper they use is harvested in a way that supports their future use," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine's leadership in certification has become increasingly important, helping to make Maine more competitive now and in the future."

The Northeast Master Logger Certification Program is the first international third-party certification of harvesting practices. A collaboration of the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine and the Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands, the program is now a model nationally, illustrating accountability and dedication to sustainable forestry practices.

"We have worked to ensure the vibrancy of the forest products industry in Maine," said the Governor. "I am confident that working together the forest products industry will continue to prosper and thrive in the State."

Governor Mourns Passing of Shep Lee

June 24, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of Shepard “Shep” Lee, founder of Lee Auto Malls and community leader. He spoke late this morning with Lee’s wife, Candice, to express his sympathies.

“Shep was a close friend and confidante and a stalwart supporter of the people of Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “His tireless advocacy for economic development is unmatched, as is his lifetime of philanthropy and dedication to Maine communities. The ripple impact of Shep’s generosity and leadership will be felt by the people and causes he supported for generations to come.”

Earlier this year, the Governor had nominated Shep Lee for appointment to the Board of Directors of the Finance Authority of Maine, on which Lee had previously served. Lee previously served on the Maine Community College Board of Trustees, the Board of Visitors of the University of Maine Law School and the Advisory Board of the School of Business at the University of Southern Maine. He had received the Muskie Access to Justice Award in 2004.

Energy Department Commits New Funding for Offshore Wind Development

June 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today welcomed news that the U.S. Department of Energy is committing \$20 million to further the development of deepwater offshore wind energy development. The University of Maine's efforts already under way to develop components and test deepwater offshore wind turbines for energy production could receive support from these funds.

"I am pleased that the federal government has affirmed its support for deepwater offshore wind energy potential in general, and the vital work being conducted by the University of Maine specifically," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine is well-positioned to compete for these federal resources because of the leadership we have built over the course of the past two years on deepwater offshore wind energy development. We have worked hard to grow a partnership between the State, Maine's Congressional Delegation, private industry and the University of Maine to further development of offshore wind energy."

The commitment of funds from the Obama Administration comes less than two weeks after Energy Secretary Chu's visit to the University of Maine.

On June 14, at the invitation of Senator Susan Collins, U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Steven Chu visited the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center. The federal agency has provided key funding to the Center and partners to aid Maine's efforts to aggressively pursue wind power development and green jobs.

The Governor thanked Maine's Congressional Delegation, which has helped the State obtain more than \$25 million dollars in grants to help develop offshore energy.

"We are grateful for this significant level of support," said the Governor. "The federal government is an important partner in our efforts to grow green jobs and advance the promise of offshore wind technology."

Maine is a recognized leader in the development of clean, renewable and home-grown energy. The State has set ambitious goals to develop clean energy and has worked to build the technological and workforce strengths that have put Maine on this path.

Maine has established a bold vision of reducing the State's consumption of liquid fossil fuels by at least 30 percent by 2030.

Earlier this month Maine joined with nine other states and the U.S. Department of Interior to establish The Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium to work to streamline the review and siting process for offshore wind projects in federal waters. Maine has already identified three demonstration sites for offshore wind technology located in Maine coastal waters. The University of Maine will be using a site off Monhegan Island for its testing.

The people of Maine supported a critical bond question in June to support energy priorities, including \$11 million to support the development of the deepwater wind energy demonstration site spearheaded by University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center.

Governor Orders Flag Lowered for Sen. Robert C. Byrd

June 28, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today ordered that flags in the State be flown at half-staff today, Monday, June 28, and Tuesday, June 29, in honor and memory of U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, who died early this morning.

“Senator Byrd was an institution in Washington and in the United States Senate,” Governor Baldacci said. “During his time, he bore witness to great change and progress, including in his own thinking. He was a master of the Constitution and a powerful advocate for his home state of West Virginia.”

The order by the Governor follows federal guidelines for the display of the U.S. Flag. Accordingly, the flag is ordered lowered on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress.

Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties

June 29, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Staff Sergeant Eric Shaw, 31, was killed by enemy gunfire in Afghanistan while serving with the 327th Infantry, First Brigade Combat Team from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. It was Staff Sergeant Shaw's third combat tour. Staff Sergeant Shaw was killed on June 27.

"All soldiers in combat pay a deep price for their service. For some, they make the ultimate sacrifice," Governor Baldacci said. "Staff Sergeant Shaw was a dedicated soldier with a young family. We will keep his wife and his children in our prayers. Our entire State mourns with them."

Staff Sergeant Shaw was born in Massachusetts and raised in Exeter, Maine, by his father and paternal grandmother, who are both deceased. His mother lives in Rhode Island.

Staff Sergeant Shaw's wife was visiting her parents in Maine when she was notified of her husband's death. Staff Sergeant Shaw's wife and three children, ages 5, 2 and six weeks, live in Tennessee.

Governor Baldacci placed a call to the family early today, and will try to speak with them again later today.

"We will provide whatever help and support we can during this terrible time," Governor Baldacci said.

The Governor will order flags flown at half-staff on the day of Staff Sergeant Shaw's funeral.

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Friday, July 2

June 29, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Sgt. Brandon Silk, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Friday, July 2, 2010.

Sgt. Silk, died June 21, while serving in Afghanistan. He was with the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Sgt. Silk's family lives in Orono.

The funeral service for Sgt. Silk is planned for Friday, July 2, at United Baptist Church, in Old Town.

Maine State Health Plan Released

June 30, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today released the 2010-2012 State Health Plan, "Making us Better: Improving Health and Lowering Costs." Maine law requires the Governor to issue a health plan every two years.

"The State Health Plan sets goals to help Maine become the healthiest state with the most efficient and effective health care delivery system," said Governor Baldacci.

"This Plan also lays out a strategy to implement the new National Health Reform for Maine and sets criteria to guide the State's decisions on which investments in technology, new buildings and new services to approve."

The plan documents progress made in Maine since 2003. Maine is now the ninth healthiest state, up from sixteenth in 2003. Maine ranks sixth best in covering the uninsured, up from nineteenth in 2002. While costs remain too high, growth in premium cost for workplace insurance is lower than the national average.

Past State Health Plans documented up to \$400 million in potentially avoidable spending in health care, that, if reduced, can help make premiums more affordable.

This year's Plan proposes to reduce health care costs by strengthening public health and prevention, supporting strategies that reduce avoidable hospitalizations and emergency department use and restructuring how we pay for health care in order to reward efficiency and prevention.

The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance and a Steering Committee of State officials will develop a roadmap of policy options the State will need to address to implement national health reform.

Said Trish Riley, Director of the Governor's Office of health Policy and Finance, "We have embarked on a public process to assure we all understand the opportunities and challenges presented by national health reform as it meets its goal of universal health coverage."

Riley said white papers will be developed and presented in public meetings to a 20 member stakeholder group, the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development, for their review and then to the Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Health Reform.

The Governor's Office of Health Policy held public forums in each of Maine's eight public health districts and with the Tribal District and held two public hearings with the Council before completing the final plan.

The Plan is available at www.maine.gov/gohpf

State Agencies Closed Friday and Monday, July 2 and 5

June 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, July 2, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

In addition, State government offices are closed for the Independence Day holiday on Monday, July 5.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, July 2, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part
SSS: http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the first of 10 State government closure days in Fiscal Year 2011, which begins July 1, 2010.

The 9 remaining closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Friday, August 6, 2010

Friday, September 3, 2010

Friday, October 8, 2010

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Governor Swears In Acting Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services

July 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today swore in Ellen Schneider as the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

Schneider, who had been serving as the State Budget Officer, replaces Commissioner Ryan Low.

“Ellen is a strong addition to my Cabinet,” Governor Baldacci said. “She has been a key adviser to me as State Budget Officer and has demonstrated a wide range of skills and a thorough understanding of the challenges Maine faces today. She is well-respected and the best person to lead the department at this time.”

Schneider served as the State Budget Officer since 2006. She has also served as the Associate Commissioner of DAFS and the Deputy Director of the Governor’s Office of Health Policy and Finance. Before joining State government, Schneider was the Senior Manager at Health Dialog, a consulting service focusing on health care quality improvement. In addition, she has been the Associate Director and the Acting Director of the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation and Executive Director of the Maine Health Care Reform Commission.

Schneider has a master’s degree from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University. For two years, she was a research associate at the University of Southern Maine.

Governor Baldacci will nominate Schneider for confirmation as the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. The nomination will be considered by the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and during a State Senate confirmation session later this year. The date of the session has not been determined.

Governor Signs Special Budget and Expenditure Order

July 1, 2010

Continues Fiscal State Spending Restraints

AUGUSTA –Governor John E. Baldacci today signed a Special Budget and Expenditure Order at the beginning of the State's Fiscal 2011-2012 cycle. The Governor has signed similar orders since 2003. This directive places a hiring freeze on vacant positions and limits overtime, travel and other expenses. The order allows for emergency exceptions.

"My Administration remain committed to restructuring government and reducing administration at all levels and in all areas," said Governor Baldacci. "This order is just one tool to keep in place critical measures to ensure Maine State Government operates efficiently and effectively."

A copy of the order follows:

01 FY 11/12

July 1, 2010

SPECIAL BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE ORDER OF JULY 1, 2010

WHEREAS, the State of Maine and National economies continue to experience significant economic challenges due to the national recession; and

WHEREAS, it is fiscally responsible to continue budgetary constraints that are currently in place;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order, effective immediately, that each State agency and department must review its programs and implement the following procedures:

Financial orders that request the transfer of balances of appropriations and allocations between line categories and accounts, that request the use of savings for project or limited period positions or that request allotment in excess of allocation, except Government/Student Intern positions, will not be approved unless the State Budget Officer determines such uses are necessary to protect the health or safety of the public, to meet payroll obligations, to fund legislatively approved salary increases and adjustments or are necessary to meet unavoidable legal obligations.

A hiring freeze remains in effect for all positions that are vacant or that become vacant, without regard to funding source. Department and agency heads should make every effort to streamline operations in order to avoid the filling of vacancies. Hiring decisions by department and agency heads will be limited by available Personal Services in General Fund accounts during FY 11.

Unscheduled overtime shall not be permitted except in emergency or other unavoidable circumstances and only with the prior approval of the department or agency head, or his or her designee.

All travel must be reduced to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain effective operations with the following exceptions:

- Travel directly related to the care of residents, wards, foster children and other individuals under state care or protection.
- Travel required in the execution of law enforcement investigations, interstate contracts directly related to the extradition of an individual, or the transfer of an individual to or from a correctional facility.
- Travel directly involved in the securing of revenue, or that directly impacts revenue.
- Travel required in emergencies or other extraordinary circumstances. Alternatives to travel should be explored, especially the use of appropriate telecommunications technology.

All contracts, grants or purchases must be reviewed by each department and agency head and reduced to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain effective operations or to meet emergency situations. Each department or agency head will be responsible for making the determination that a contract, grant or purchase satisfies the emergency or cost effective operation standard in accordance with guidelines developed by the Division of Purchases. The Director of Purchases is authorized to return to a department or agency head any contracts, grants or purchases that are determined to be nonessential or that can be delayed or postponed. Federal Expenditures Fund accounts and Federal Block Grant Fund accounts are exempted, only if a General Fund match or other General Fund obligation is not required.

Nothing in this Executive Order may be interpreted to authorize departments and agencies to postpone the processing of invoices payable in fiscal year 2009-10. This Executive Order also is not intended to prevent state agencies and departments from addressing emergencies or imminent threats to health and safety, or from fulfilling legal obligations entered into prior to its effective date.

The Executive Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2011, unless modified or rescinded by Executive Order. This Order supersedes 05 FY 01/02, 02 FY 02/03, 07 FY 02/03, 01 FY 03/04, 19 FY04/05, 26 FY 04/05, 01 FY 06/07, 17 FY 06/07, 01 FY 07/08, 17 FY 08/09 and 01 FY 10/11.

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Maine State Library to Expand Access to Broadband Statewide

July 2, 2010

AUGUSTA –Governor John E. Baldacci today announced that the Maine State Library has been awarded more than \$1.36 million in federal Recovery Act funds to expand broadband access and education at many of Maine's public libraries.

"The Maine State Library project is an important step forward in enabling all Maine residents – especially those in currently underserved areas - to have access to broadband technology and services," said Governor Baldacci. "High speed Internet access is vital to expand our educational opportunities and workforce development and is an important way to connect Mainers to information and services. By connecting Maine people and businesses to high-speed broadband – students, workers, families and companies – Maine will be able to compete for business and jobs now and into the future."

The Maine State Library's proposal is called The Maine Public Library Information Commons Project. The goals of the program are to:

- Increase the number of broadband workstations and upgrade public computers at 107 public libraries;
- Add 11 video conferencing regional hubs and three mobile computer labs;
- Enhance training opportunities for librarians and residents;
- Ensure that vulnerable groups such as the unemployed and the elderly are able to access assistance to broadband technologies.

"The Maine State Library is delighted to have been awarded this very competitive federal grant to serve the people of Maine more effectively through advanced technology in its public libraries," said Linda Lord, Maine State Librarian. "It is no secret that public libraries are serving more and more citizens in the face of severe budget challenges. This grant and the collaboration with our Department of Labor Workforce Division led by John Dorrer and The Collaboration on Innovation, Technology and Equal Access to Justice chaired by Associate Justice Andrew Mead with Vice Chair Juliet Holmes-Smith, Volunteer Lawyers Project Director, will fund technology and training to make a significant difference in the lives of job seeking Mainers and those needing 'access to justice.' We thank the Broadband Strategy Council, the ConnectME Authority, the more than 100 libraries involved and the Governor's Office for their support of this project."

The Governor said that the Federal Recovery Act is helping Maine in the aggressive efforts to improve its information superhighway. The federal Recovery Act has provided more than \$25 million to build dark fiber networks across Maine, including many unserved and underserved areas. The State has also received \$11.5 million in Recovery Act funds to promote quality of health care through technology and to develop the State's health care workforce.

The Maine Public Library Information Commons Project is funded through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program with a match that includes:

- \$357,369 from the Maine Telecommunications Education Access Fund;
- \$52,000 from libraries to partially fund computers from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; and
- \$179,245 in a match in time and salary from the Maine State Library, Maine InfoNet and the Maine School and Library Network Circuit Rider.

Critical to the success of the Maine State Library's application for funding was the partnerships that were built with the Maine Department of Labor, Maine Information Network, Access to Justice, Project Compass and Maine InfoNet.

For more information on the Maine State Library's grant, visit <http://www.maine.gov/msl/btop.htm>

Date Set for Senate Confirmation Session

July 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci, working cooperatively with Senate President Elizabeth Mitchell, will call the Maine State Senate into session for the purpose of voting upon the confirmation of appointments.

The confirmation session will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2010.

Governor Baldacci to Participate in National Governors Association Annual Meeting and Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers

July 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Starting today, Governor John E. Baldacci will be participating in the 102nd Annual Meeting of the National Governors Association followed by the 34th Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers. Both events are being held in Massachusetts.

“These events provide an opportunity for state and provincial leaders to discuss critical issues facing us all, to share best practices, and to interact with federal, international and private sector officials who are essential partners in the pursuit of the goal of prosperity for our citizens,” said Governor Baldacci. “I look forward to the policy and administration issue discussions that we will engage in while at the national and regional meetings.”

The National Governors Association meeting in Boston begins today and continues through Sunday, July 11. Areas of focus include implementation of the federal health care reform law passed last year by Congress, streamlining of government service under severe budget shortfalls and other economic recovery issues. In addition to Plenary and Governors-Only meetings, Governor Baldacci is expected to attend the Joint Committee Session on the issues of Education, Early Childhood and Workforce and Health and Human Services; the session of the Special Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety; and the Economic Development and Commerce Committee session.

Featured prominently at the Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers is the issue of energy security, efficiency and supporting the development of renewable energy to benefit the region. Many presenters at the day-long meeting are from Maine, which the Governor said is not surprising given Maine’s aggressive pursuit of energy independence.

“In Maine, we recognize that we must make efficiency a priority while also investing in and supporting development of alternative, renewable energy resources,” said the Governor. “Maine’s focused commitment to energy independence began in 2003 when the price of oil was \$20 a barrel. Renewable energy development will create jobs and positively impact our bottom line while preserving our natural environment for generations to come.”

Sessions at the conference will include Renewable Power Development; Addressing Climate Change and Energy Efficiency; Energy Efficiency and Clean Jobs; Smart Grid and Emerging Energy Technologies; and Transportation in the Northeast. Ambassadorial representation from the two countries will also be present at the meeting to discuss the U.S. and Canada relationship.

“The global financial crisis hastens us to find collaborative regional approaches to economic, energy and other issues,” said Governor Baldacci. “We must take advantage of our combined strength to realize opportunities to grow good paying jobs and increase our energy independence.”

In addition to the larger conference objectives, the Governor is expected to sign two Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).

On Monday, Governor Baldacci and Premier Darrell Dexter of Nova Scotia will sign an MOU to work cooperatively on renewable ocean electricity generation. The MOU calls for Maine and Nova Scotia to share information on renewable electricity with a focus on ocean tidal energy and offshore wind energy and explore opportunities to bring together tidal energy academics, researchers, policy makers and private sector developers from the two jurisdictions.

The Governor will also sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Premier Shawn Graham of New Brunswick to establish a Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative. The MOU recognizes the strong and deep historical, cultural and artistic ties between Maine and New Brunswick and calls for further exploration of collaborative cross-border cultural projects, as well as business and cultural trade opportunities.

Information on the National Governor's Association meeting can be found at www.nga.org

Information on the resolutions as agreed upon at the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers Conference will be posted on <http://www.scics.gc.ca/>

Governor Orders Flags Flown at Half-Staff on Tuesday, July 13 2010

July 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Coast Guard Lt. Sean D. Krueger, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset on Tuesday, July 13, 2010.

Lt. Krueger died in a helicopter crash off the coast of Washington last week. Lt. Krueger grew up in Maine and attended Massabesic High School in Waterboro.

“Members of the United States Coast Guard answer the call of duty every day,” Governor Baldacci said. “In Maine, we have deep appreciation for the heroism. They are always there when we need them. Our hearts and prayers are with Lt. Krueger’s family.”

A memorial service has been planned for Lt. Krueger on Tuesday in Alaska.

Governor Signs Memorandum of Understanding on Ocean Energy Development with Premier of Nova Scotia

July 12, 2010

LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter to work cooperatively on renewable ocean electricity generation.

The MOU calls for Maine and Nova Scotia to share information on renewable electricity with a focus on ocean tidal energy and offshore wind energy and explore opportunities to bring together tidal energy academics, researchers, policy makers and private sector developers from the two jurisdictions.

“Maine is forging a path toward clean, renewable, home-grown energy development which will keep hard-earned dollars here at home and provide good paying jobs, all while preserving our valuable natural resources,” said Governor Baldacci. “Premier Dexter shares my commitment to work regionally to address these critical issues and I’m pleased that we are forging this partnership to explore the opportunities before us.”

The MOU was signed by the two leaders during the 34th Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers being held in Lenox, Massachusetts. The Conference focused leaders on the issue of energy security, efficiency and supporting the development of renewable energy to benefit the region.

“Nova Scotia has always enjoyed a strong economic, social and cultural partnership with Maine, and this MOU is another example of how our governments will work to grow the economy, create jobs and protect the environment,” said Premier Dexter.

Among objectives spelled out in the MOU, next year Maine and Nova Scotia will host a Tidal Energy Symposium in Nova Scotia in conjunction with the 35th Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.

“Our close regional collaboration puts Maine in a better position to realize the promise of a stronger economy and cleaner environment,” said Governor Baldacci.

The text of the MOU follows:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND THE STATE OF MAINE ON COOPERATION REGARDING TIDAL ENERGY

The Government of the Province of Nova Scotia of Canada and the State of Maine of the United States of America, hereinafter referred to as the “Participants”, RECOGNIZING a vigorous tradition of cultural, social and economic connection between their peoples; INTENDING to secure benefits to both of their peoples through the development of mutually beneficial renewable energy technology; IDENTIFYING the Bay of Fundy and the Gulf of Maine as two of the most promising tidal energy resources on the planet;

and NOTING that tidal research has been taking place in the region for 100 years Have reached the following understanding: 1. Objectives This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will have the following objectives: (i) To investigate opportunities and areas within which to cooperate on furthering off-shore wind and tidal energy technology and application; and (ii) To cooperate on tidal energy research and development to ensure the maximum contribution to our respective Renewable Portfolio Standards.

Economic and Social Cooperation In order to attain the objectives, the Participants will engage in initiatives such as the following: (i) Furthering the research on development issues surrounding tidal energy and offshore wind production, including research on community acceptance and support, impacts on marine life and birds, contribution to grid stability and associated matters; (ii) Bringing together tidal energy academics, researchers, policy makers and private sector developers from our two jurisdictions in Fall 2010 to share best practices and discuss regulatory frameworks and adaptive management approaches. This will coincide with the Offshore Energy Environmental Research (OEER) Association's fall workshop to be held October 13-14, 2010; (iii) Looking toward the Tidal Energy Symposium, to be held in the Summer of 2011 and organized by Nova Scotia in conjunction with the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG-ECP), to see how we can work together to shape the region's leadership position in this important new area of renewable energy development; (iv) Discussing the possibility of expanding this MOU within the region to include other provinces and states; and (v) Timely exchange of information to support the achievement of the objectives.

Organization (i) In order to meet the objectives of this MOU, the Participants will establish a Council at the ministerial level ("the Council"), comprising the Governor's designee for the State of Maine and the Minister of Energy for Nova Scotia. The Council will communicate annually or as the Participants decide. (ii) The Participants may consult, in accordance with their internal mechanisms, their respective private and public sectors concerning matters related to the work of the Council. (iii) Participants may also consult entities outside of their immediate jurisdictions concerning matters related to the work of the Council.

Work Program The Council members will, after consulting colleagues and private sector partners from each of their respective jurisdictions, jointly prepare and implement a Work Program to initiate the implementation tasks for this MOU and will place it for consideration before the Council for its approval. New initiatives, frameworks or other mechanisms intended to achieve the objectives of this MOU may be established with the mutual consent of all Participants. Final Dispositions (i) This MOU will come into effect upon signature and, unless terminated by consensus or upon written notice by a Participant, will remain in effect through December, 2011.

(ii) The Participants may renew this MOU upon their mutual written consent.

(iii) This MOU may be amended by the written consent of all Participants.

(iv) This MOU is not intended to create legal obligations under federal, state, provincial or international law.

Governor Signs Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Initiatives with New Brunswick Premier

July 12, 2010

LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with New Brunswick Premier Shawn Graham to establish a Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative.

Specifically, the MOU recognizes the strong and deep historical, cultural and artistic ties between Maine and New Brunswick. The agreement calls for further exploration of collaborative cross-border cultural projects, as well as business and cultural trade opportunities. Among the specific projects that the Cultural Initiative will provide support to is the upcoming 2014 World Acadian Congress. That event will be held in an area encompassing northern Maine, Témiscouata, Quebec and northwestern New Brunswick.

“Maine’s ties with our friends in New Brunswick are strong. I am pleased that in the past few years we have expanded our partnerships, especially in the areas of education, energy and the economy,” said Governor Baldacci. “The agreement we sign today builds on these ties and will enhance our creative economies.”

“This initiative builds on the long tradition of friendship New Brunswickers have enjoyed with the people of Maine,” said Premier Graham. “We look forward to sharing the rich culture of our communities and artists with our neighbors and identifying new opportunities for cooperation in the promotion of arts and culture.”

The MOU was signed by the two leaders during the 34th Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers being held in Lenox, Massachusetts.

As part of the agreement, Maine and New Brunswick will each appoint one person to serve as the point of contact for the tasks outlined in the MOU. Governor Baldacci has appointed Donna McNeil, the Director of the Maine Arts Commission, to fill this role for the State. The points of contact will report back to both governments by Dec. 1, 2010, to provide initial assessment of priorities after collecting input from cultural industry stakeholders.

The text of the MOU follows:

Memorandum of Understanding Between The State of Maine And The Province of New Brunswick To Enhance the Mutual Benefits Of Maine/New Brunswick Cultural Relations Through the Establishment of a Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative

WHEREAS, The State of Maine (“Maine”) shares deep and long standing artistic, historical, and cultural ties with the Province of New Brunswick (“New Brunswick”); Maine and New Brunswick each have, existing within their respective borders, highly talented artists and craftspeople; Maine and New Brunswick each have a population that includes well-trained performers and musicians; Maine and New

Brunswick each have throughout their respective state and province a wide range of art and cultural galleries, museums, historic places, and performance spaces; Maine and New Brunswick have each adopted policies to promote arts and culture; Maine and New Brunswick each recognize the value in attracting and retaining a skilled and creative workforce; Maine and New Brunswick each recognize the value that vital, creative individuals, institutions, businesses, and communities have on the economic well being of their respective state and province; Maine and New Brunswick place value on opportunities to learn from each others' artists, performers, cultural institutions, creative businesses and creative communities; Maine and New Brunswick will collaborate in the organization of the next Congrès mondial acadien (World Acadian Congress) which will take place in the northern region of Maine, the northwestern region of New Brunswick and Témiscouata, Québec in August 2014; Maine and New Brunswick recognize that strengthened cultural relations between their respective state and province can expand cultural markets, improve efficiencies, create opportunities; and result in the mutual enrichment of cultural resources. NOW THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine and I, Shawn Graham, Premier of the Province of New Brunswick, do hereby enter into this "Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Maine and the Province of New Brunswick to enhance the Mutual Benefits of Maine/New Brunswick Cultural Relations" and do hereby agree as hereinafter set forth. Maine and New Brunswick agree to establish a Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative by agreeing to jointly undertake the following tasks: 1. Examine any manner of simplifying and streamlining border-crossing processes for artists, performers, cultural institutions, and creative businesses; 2. Explore the potential of enhancing the exchange of cultural information; 3. Explore the potential for collaborative cross-border cultural projects; 4. Identify possible new and/or expanded cross-border business and/or cultural tourism opportunities; 5. Explore the differences and similarities between approaches to the creative economy and creative communities in Maine and New Brunswick to assess how successes may be mirrored. Maine and New Brunswick agree to dedicate human resources from their respective state and provincial agencies for the exploration of the tasks described herein. Maine and New Brunswick agree to appoint one person from each government to serve as each state's or province's point of contact (the "Joint Representatives"). The tasks are to be completed in two phases. Phase 1 work will overview the tasks herein, will identify common principles to guide efforts in support of tangible initiatives, and will assess priorities and possibilities. Such review will be completed in consultation with cultural industry stakeholders from both Maine and New Brunswick. The Joint Representatives shall deliver to their respective governments a report on the Phase 1 activities no later than December 1, 2010. Upon completion of Phase 1, Maine and New Brunswick agree to proceed to Phase 2. This phase will detail the status of all priorities and possibilities identified during Phase 1; and provide a recommended timeline for future work. The Joint Representatives shall present a final Phase 2 report to their respective governments no later than April 30, 2011. Upon completion of the items identified above, Maine and New Brunswick agree to consider entering into a further agreement to implement mutually beneficial actions. FINAL DISPOSITIONS

- (i) The Participants may renew this MOU upon their mutual written consent.
- (ii) This MOU may be amended by the written consent of all Participants.
- (iii) This MOU is not intended to create legal obligations under state, provincial or international law.

Governor Nominates Ellen Schneider as Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services

July 13, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Ellen Schneider as the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

Schneider was sworn in as Acting Commissioner on July 1.

Schneider served as the State Budget Officer since 2006. She has also served as the Associate Commissioner of DAFS and the Deputy Director of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance. Before joining State government, Schneider was the Senior Manager at Health Dialog, a consulting service focusing on health care quality improvement. In addition, she has been the Associate Director and the Acting Director of the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation and Executive Director of the Maine Health Care Reform Commission.

Schneider has a master's degree from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University. For two years, she was a research associate at the University of Southern Maine.

The nomination will be considered by the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee. A State Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Nominates Two for Reappointment to Transportation Posts

July 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Gerard P. Conley for reappointment to the Maine Turnpike Authority and John D. Bubier for reappointment to the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority.

Conley was first appointed to the Maine Turnpike Authority by Governor Baldacci in 2004 and was named Chairman later that year. He has served as a City Councilor and as Mayor of Portland, his hometown. Conley was elected to the Maine House of Representatives in 1964 and worked in the Legislature for 21 years, serving both chambers. He served as Assistant Democratic Leader, Senate Democratic Leader and Senate President during his tenure. Conley was also an employee of the Portland Terminal Co. for 27 years.

Bubier was appointed to the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority in 2004 by Governor Baldacci. He is currently the City Manager of Biddeford and he previously served as the City Manager of Bath. He has worked for the Greater Portland Council of Governments as both Deputy and Executive Director. In addition, Bubier has served as Town Manager of both Lisbon and Boothbay. He is currently the Chair of the Policy Committee for the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System and works on the Biddeford Regional Transit Committee and Maine Municipal Association's Transportation Sub Committee.

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority recently announced that it had been awarded a \$35 million grant from The Recovery Act. The agreement between the State of Maine and the United States Department of Transportation will allow NNEPRA to extend the Amtrak Downeaster passenger service from Portland to Brunswick and to rehabilitate existing rail lines.

These nominations will be considered by the Transportation Committee. A State Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Baldacci Issues Executive Order Commemorating 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

July 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has issued an Executive Order commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and reaffirming the State's commitment to make State programs, jobs and activities fully accessible to people with disabilities.

In addition to designating the week of July 25, 2010, as "ADA Recognition Week," the Order builds upon earlier work by the Administration to improve services and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

"The Americans with Disabilities Act has removed many barriers for people with disabilities and improved access and opportunities for them to participate and succeed in every station of life," said Governor Baldacci. "This Executive Order makes the promise that we will continue this important work."

The Order directs State agencies and officials with ensuring accessible communications practices, providing training for employees and contractors who provide state services, facilitating employment of people with disabilities, and developing nondiscrimination policies.

Accessibility coordinators in each agency were further tasked with conducting a self-evaluation of their programs, services and activities to ensure compliance with the ADA and to determine any actions necessary to enable the agency to comply fully with ADA standards.

The full text of the Executive Order is below:

AN ORDER COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND REAFFIRMING THE STATE OF MAINE'S COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") was signed into law on July 26, 1990 to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities and established a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers, changing perceptions, and increasing full participation in community life; and

WHEREAS, the full promise of the ADA will only be reached if public entities remain committed in their efforts to fully implement the ADA; and

WHEREAS, the State of Maine recognizes that all its citizens have the right to fully participate in leading productive and active lives without regard to their disabilities and that supporting the rights of persons with disabilities is essential to the economic and social well-being of the entire State; and

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has taken the initiative to enact laws and issue orders for the protection of the rights of people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, State agencies have adopted policies and taken action to provide accessibility for people with disabilities in all State programs; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Governor issued Executive Order 7 FY 04/05 (dated September 29, 2003) establishing and reaffirming the Office of State Accessibility Coordinator to coordinate the State's continuing efforts to comply with and carry out the State's responsibilities under Title II of the ADA and directing each department and agency to designate an accessibility coordinator, to plan for and implement actions for accessibility, and to adopt grievance procedures to resolve any complaints; and

WHEREAS, continuing to remove barriers that limit the participation of people with disabilities in employment, programs and activities of the State of Maine remains an ongoing concern and requires the concerted and focused efforts of all agencies and their partners to remove those barriers; and

WHEREAS, State government bears a unique responsibility in demonstrating to all people the goals and values of our common life, including serving as a model of accessibility and non-discrimination regarding people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the removal of all barriers to equal opportunity for all of our State's citizens requires the leadership and the concentrated and continued attention of the State administration;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, under the power vested in me, in recognition of the upcoming 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and in pursuit of the goal of providing equal opportunity to people with disabilities according to Federal law and the law of the State of Maine, do hereby celebrate the progress that has been made under the ADA, reaffirm the principles of equality and inclusion, and recommit our efforts to full accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities in compliance with the ADA; and I do hereby proclaim the week of July 25, 2010 as ADA Recognition Week throughout the State of Maine and commend its observance to all citizens.

Responsibilities of State Agencies and Officials under this Executive Order

The responsibilities described in Executive Order 7 FY 04/05 are reaffirmed and shall be implemented as described in that Executive Order. In addition to the responsibilities set forth in Executive Order 7 FY 04/05, the following State agencies and officials have particular responsibilities for carrying out the intent of this Executive Order.

Responsibilities of each department or agency head are as follows:

a. To ensure that the department's or agency's communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others, i.e., that all electronic documents, websites, audiovisual materials, and other communication media, whether created by State employees or by contracted vendors, are available in accessible alternative formats appropriate to their use, consistent with the standards and best practices adopted by the Chief Information Officer;

- b. To ensure that the department or agency promotes and facilitates the employment of people with disabilities within its ranks, collaborating as appropriate with the Maine Jobs Council, the Bureau of Human Resources within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services within the Department of Labor, consistent with the mandates of Executive Order 13 FY 06/07 to make the State of Maine a model employer;
- c. To ensure that the department or agency has a non-discrimination policy and procedures in place and has provided training to staff regarding accommodation requests and the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances, consistent with 12-168 CMR Chapter 50: Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure; and
- d. To review and approve ADA plans and modifications of plans developed by the department or agency Accessibility Coordinator and strive to implement such plans and modifications.

Responsibilities of the Chief Information Officer (CIO), consistent with 5 MRSA §1973, are as follows:

- a. To provide leadership to departments, agencies and employees and, if needed, disseminate reports, policy directives or clarifications to support accessible information technology (IT);
- b. To review all RFP's and contracts for information technology for compliance with State policies and standards for accessibility; and
- c. To authorize and maintain an advisory group (the Information Technology Accessibility Committee) to evaluate technological developments, identify issues of IT accessibility within State programs, and propose to the CIO policies, standards, and practices to improve IT accessibility for people with disabilities.

Responsibilities of the department or agency Accessibility Coordinators are as follows:

- a. To complete an updated ADA self-evaluation reviewing programs, services and activities of the department or agency to determine what, if any, actions are necessary for the department or agency to comply with and to carry out its responsibilities under the ADA; and
- b. To prepare a plan for implementing any actions necessary for compliance under the ADA, such actions to be completed as soon as practicable, and submit a copy of the plan to the Office of State Accessibility Coordinator and to the Office of the Governor.

Responsibilities of the State Accessibility Coordinator are as follows:

- a. To meet with and assist each Accessibility Coordinator by September 15, 2010 regarding the agency's ADA self-evaluation and to provide a template for the agency to complete this task; and
- b. To ensure training programs are in place for department or agency Accessibility Coordinators, other employees assigned by departments or agencies, and contractors delivering aspects of State programs, regarding the provisions of applicable law and implementation of best practices.

Applicability

The purpose of this Executive Order is to build on the State's successes to date and to reaffirm the State's commitment to comply with applicable federal law with regard to participation by qualified individuals with disabilities in the services, programs and activities of the State. Nothing in this Executive Order should be construed as an actual or implicit waiver of the sovereign immunity of the State of Maine.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is July 14, 2010

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Thursday, July 22, in the City of Portland

July 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance of U.S. veteran and pilot Thomas Casagrande, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Thursday, July 22, 2010, in the City of Portland. The City requested the flags be lowered on the day of Casagrande's funeral.

Casagrande was a Portland resident who died in the tragic airplane crash near the Portland International Jetport on Saturday.

Casagrande served two tours in Vietnam. He served 20 years as a civil service test pilot for the U.S. Department of Defense before retiring in 1995.

State Finishes FY 2010 with \$70.4 Million Surplus

July 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – The State of Maine finished Fiscal Year 2010 with a surplus of \$70.4 million. The fiscal year ended on June 30, 2010.

“The surplus puts Maine in a better position to address a number of challenges facing our State,” Governor John E. Baldacci said. “We are beginning to see signs that our economy is recovering from the recession, but things remain fragile and we must be vigilant. The surplus is good news, but it’s not the end of the story.”

“I am committed to rebuilding the State’s reserves,” Governor Baldacci said. “Working with the Legislature, we have put in place a frugal State budget that has controlled spending and made our State more financially secure.”

The surplus is the result of improved revenues, particularly in corporate income taxes and sales and use taxes, and constrained spending by State agencies.

State law dictates how the surplus can be used. By law, it is allocated to the Budget Stabilization Fund, the Loan Insurance Reserve Fund at the Finance Authority of Maine, General Fund Operating Capital, the state retirement system and retiree health, the Capital Construction and Improvement Reserve Fund and the governor’s contingent account.

“The surplus strengthens Maine’s cash position and will help us avoid short-term borrowing,” said Ellen Schneiter, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs. “But we recognize that we still have significant budgetary hurdles to overcome.”

Maine will face a budget gap in fiscal year 2011 of roughly \$100 million if the U.S. Congress does not extend enhanced support for Medicaid. Versions of the extension have passed both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, but agreement has not been reached on final passage.

The Baldacci administration is working on contingency plans for bringing the budget into balance in the event that Congress does not act by Oct. 1. Those plans include a potential curtailment.

“The Governor has directed State agencies to identify spending cuts totaling \$100 million for inclusion in a potential curtailment,” Schneiter said. “Ideally, we would continue to build our reserves, but the 2010 surplus provides more options as we deal with the immediate issue of replacing the anticipated Medicaid dollars.”

“We are watching revenues and the economy closely,” Commissioner Schneiter said. “If the economy continues to meet or exceed expectations, our options will expand. We are optimistic based on the finish to the last fiscal year, but we will continue to prepare for other scenarios.”

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Saturday, July 24, in the Town of Farmington

July 21, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance of Farmington Police Chief Richard E. Caton, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Saturday, July 24, 2010, in the Town of Farmington. The Town requested the flags be lowered on the day of Chief Caton's funeral.

Governor Declares Emergency to Help Restore Power

July 22, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has signed an Emergency Declaration that will allow power crews from other states to come to Maine and to help restore electricity and extend hours that crews can work.

The Emergency Declaration was ordered at 2:30 p.m. today to expedite power restoration for thousands of households in the State currently without electricity as a result of last night's severe thunderstorms, rain and wind.

Governor Baldacci and the Maine Emergency Management Agency monitored the severe weather last night and its aftermath.

Central Maine Power Company said that with the waiver provided under the Emergency Declaration, they hope to have electricity fully restored by Friday evening.

"Crews are doing their best to restore power in areas that sustained damage from the sudden and severe wind and rain that hit portions of Maine last night," Governor Baldacci said. "To protect public health and safety, we will do what we can to help get electrical service repaired."

The State of Emergency proclamation will facilitate a waiver from the Federal Department of Transportation to extend the hours of service for electrical workers and allow additional crews from other states to assist with repairs.

The text of the proclamation follows.

Governor's Emergency Proclamation for

US DOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Hours of Service Waiver

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has experienced a severe summer storm that has left thousands of Maine homes and businesses out of power; and

WHEREAS, work crews will have to work many hours to restore power; and

WHEREAS, power restoration crews will be requested from other states to assist in power restoration; and

WHEREAS, federal rules determine the number of hours the driver of an electrical line repair vehicle may operate; and

WHEREAS, drivers of such vehicles must cease operations when they reach the federal limit on hours of operation, and therefore would have to cease power restoration; and

WHEREAS, these conditions threaten public health and safety and endanger public property if power cannot be restored to Maine homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, these conditions are expected to extend until July 25, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a State of Emergency will facilitate the granting of a waiver from the US the U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration pursuant to 49 CFR part 390.23 to allow relief from 49 CFR parts 390 through 399 subject to the limitations described below, and therefore allow drivers of electrical line repair vehicle to operate additional hours, and

WHEREAS, motor carriers that have an Out-Of-Service Order in effect may not take advantage of the relief from regulation that this declaration provides under 49 CFR 390.23

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of Maine, find that these conditions constitute a civil emergency under 37-B M.R.S.A. section 742, and for the purpose pursuant to 49 CFR part 390.23 of facilitating a waiver to the U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, specifically 49 CFR part 395 Hours of Service of Drivers, do hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists as of July 22, 2010, through July 25, 2010.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed this proclamation in Augusta this 22th day of July in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Ten

John E. Baldacci Governor

Governor Celebrates New Company to Locate at Brunswick Landing

July 23, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Brunswick area local, State, business and redevelopment officials to announce the commitment of Kestrel Aircraft Company to locate to Brunswick Landing, the site of former Brunswick Naval Air Station. The air station is in the process of decommissioning, which will be complete in 2011.

"While the federal government made a mistake five years ago to decide to close Brunswick Naval Air Station, the State and region joined with partners to aggressively reinvigorate the economy of the area and to bring opportunity to its residents," said Governor Baldacci. "Today we are proud to recognize the continuing efforts of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority and all our partners in the area who have worked hard to attract good companies like Kestrel Aircraft Company to Brunswick Landing."

Kestrel Aircraft will be developing and manufacturing composite turboprop aircraft at their site at Brunswick Landing. According to company officials at the announcement today, at full production Kestrel will have invested \$100 million and is expected to create more than 300 good-paying jobs in Brunswick.

"The decision of Kestrel Aircraft Company to locate their base of operations at Brunswick Landing is a testament to the talented workforce here in Maine," said Governor Baldacci. "It also demonstrates the success that can occur when local, regional, state and federal governments are all working cooperatively with the private sector on economic development. The international appeal and worldwide demand for the composite technology being used by Kestrel will benefit jobs throughout the State, boost Maine's economic competitiveness and showcase Maine's world-class innovation economy."

Kestrel plans to enter into a lease option for Hangar #6 and start the initial design phase of the project this November. The company will hire roughly 50 to 70 engineers for design and prototype development, and expand by an additional 250 people when they begin production.

"Kestrel Aircraft Company will complement the already strong composite technology cluster in the Midcoast and the development of the Maine Advanced Technology and Engineering Center, which will be located at Brunswick Landing," said the Governor.

The Advanced Technology Center, which is a partnership between the University of Maine and Southern Maine Community College, received significant funding this year when voters approved \$4.75 million for the program.

"The redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station has been a top priority of my administration, a priority that is also shared by the Maine Legislature and the people of Maine," said the Governor.

For more information about the redevelopment authority, please visit: www.mrra.us

Governor Nominates Members to Retirement System, Labor Relations and Workers' Comp Boards

July 26, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated seven people to serve on the Maine Public Employees Retirement System Board of Trustees, the Maine Labor Relations Board and the Maine Workers' Compensation Board of Directors.

Catherine Sullivan of Portland and Richard Metivier of Lewiston are being nominated for reappointment to the Retirement System Board.

Patricia Dunn of Scarborough is being nominated for appointment to the Labor Relations Board, and Karl Dornish of Winslow and Richard Hornbeck of Bowdoinham are being nominated for reappointment.

Glenn Burroughs of Lewiston and Emery Deabay of Bucksport are being nominated for appointment to the Workers' Compensation Board.

The appointments will be considered by the Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Labor. The Maine State Senate will hold a confirmation session on Aug. 25 to consider appointments.

Governor Celebrates 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

July 26, 2010

BANGOR - Governor John E. Baldacci today marked the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at an awards ceremony in Bangor hosted by The Maine ADA Coalition. The awards event recognized Maine individuals and organizations exhibiting dedication to advancing the goals of the ADA.

"Maine is a stronger community because of the ADA and its impact in advancing inclusion of people with disabilities and improving opportunities for them and their families," said Governor Baldacci. "The vital work of the ADA didn't stop when it was signed into law; it needs to be constantly supported and advocated for by us all."

The Governor said that in many areas, Maine has been at the forefront of addressing accessibility and civil rights issues of people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Regulations of the Maine Human Rights Commission were certified by the U.S. Department of Justice as equivalent to the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, making Maine one of only a handful of states with a certified standard.

The Baldacci Administration has promoted opportunities for Maine citizens with disabilities who want to live, learn, recreate and work. The Governor signed an Executive Order in 2006 to ensure that Maine State Government is a model employer for people with disabilities. Maine's Chief Information Officer has maintained an Information Technology Accessibility Committee (ITAC) and has adopted accessibility policies and best practices for making the State web accessible.

Earlier this month, the Governor signed an Executive Order commemorating the ADA and reaffirming the State of Maine's commitment to accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.

"Since taking office in 2003, I have worked to ensure all Maine citizens have access to opportunities to realize their dreams here in Maine, and to promote efforts to grow prosperity for our state – now and into the future. People with disabilities are assets for Maine's future and economic growth," said the Governor.

The Governor presented six awards on behalf of the Maine ADA Coalition:

- Bowdoin College for promoting accessibility;
- Bangor Police Department for model compliance efforts by a State or municipal agency;
- Hilton Garden Inn in Lewiston for model delivery of goods or services by a public accommodation;
- Aroostook Mall staff for an organization working for improved service for the public;

- Jan DeVinney, former Director of Maine's Division of Deafness, for an individual working for improved service for the public;
- Gracie Theatre, Husson University, in Bangor for Honorary Award, is a model for public accommodations.

Governor Names Acting Director of State Planning Office

July 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced that Martha Freeman will leave her position as the Director of Maine State Planning Office in August.

“Martha has been with my Administration since the beginning,” Governor Baldacci said. “She is a trusted adviser and friend, and has been a fierce advocate for good government and for the people of Maine. I wish her the best and want to thank her for her service.”

Governor Baldacci will appoint Tim Glidden as Acting Director upon Freeman’s departure.

Glidden received a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Colby College and an M.F.S. in Forestry Sciences from Yale University. Glidden’s career in State government includes serving as a Principal Legislative Analyst in the Maine Legislature’s Office of Policy and Legal Analysis. Since 2001, Glidden has served as Director of the Land for Maine’s Future program and co-leader of the Natural Resource and Energy Team at the Maine State Planning Office. Glidden has also been the Deputy Director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

“Tim has an impressive career in public service, and he will be a strong leader for the State Planning Office,” Governor Baldacci said. “He has earned a reputation of integrity, honesty and professionalism and is well-respected for his work to help conserve some of Maine’s most treasured areas and working landscapes.”

Freeman has accepted a position as a Senior Organizational Development Partner at the University of Southern Maine, where she will help with a planned reorganization.

Before being named Director of the State Planning Office, Freeman was Governor Baldacci’s Deputy Chief of Staff. In addition, she has a diverse resume that includes serving as a Special Assistant to Maine’s Attorney General and Director of the Maine Legislature’s Office of Policy and Legal Analysis. She has also been a lawyer, a licensed clinical professional counselor, adjunct university professor and a consultant.

Freeman’s last day will be Aug. 20.

Governor Recognizes Women Veterans

July 28, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today celebrated Maine's women veterans at a ceremony to unveil the new Maine Women Veterans Memorial Plaque. The plaque was designed as a result of a resolve passed by the 124th Maine Legislature to create a permanent memorial to women veterans in the State House. The Governor joined women veterans and supporters at a State House event today to unveil the design and to begin the fundraising effort to cover the \$24,000 cost of the plaque.

"I am pleased to be here today to honor Maine women veterans and their continuing history of service to our nation," said Governor Baldacci. "Throughout Maine and U.S. history, the sacrifices of women veterans have been unimaginable. They deserve to have a place in the State House to serve as a reminder of all of the contributions and the personal courage and dedication these women have exhibited."

The plaque was sculpted by Gary Cooper of Fayette, Maine. It depicts Maine women who served in the military over four centuries. State Rep. Linda Valentino sponsored the resolve to create the plaque and chairs the fundraising committee along with the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services. The goal is to have the plaque dedicated in the Hall of Flags at the State House on Veterans Day this November.

"For centuries women volunteered to fight, yet they were not officially recognized as veterans until the 1970s," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine currently is home to more than 10,000 women veterans. This number is not surprising, because caring for our neighbors and watching out for our community is what Mainers are all about."

The Maine Veterans Homes, Rep. Valentino and a number of veterans groups contributed checks toward covering the cost of the plaque during the ceremony on Wednesday.

For information about contributing to the Memorial Fund, contact the Bureau of Veterans' Services at 207-626-4464.

Governor Announces Nominations for Education Posts

July 28, 2010

Nominations include Education Commissioner, State Board of Education and

Maine Community College System Board of Trustees

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Angela Faherty for appointment as the Commissioner of the Department of Education.

“Angela’s experience and expertise within the department are critical as we continue our efforts to improve education in Maine,” Governor Baldacci said. “She has demonstrated her skills and leadership as both Acting Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, and is the right person to lead the Department.”

Faherty was sworn in on May 3 as the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Education.

She served as Deputy Commissioner for four years, and has been a classroom teacher at the elementary, middle and high school levels in literacy development, special education, and gifted and talented. She was assistant professor at the University of Northern Iowa and adjunct professor at the University of Southern Maine, St. Joseph’s College and Walden University.

Faherty earned her bachelor’s degree from the City College of New York and received her master’s in Education from the City University of New York and a doctorate in Education from the University of Missouri.

State Board of Education

The Governor has also nominated Martha Harris of Winterport and Jana Lapoint of Falmouth for the State Board of Education.

Harris is the President of Paine, Lynch and Harris, PA, and has served on the School Board of SAD 22 for more than 15 years. She received her J.D. from Northeastern School of Law.

Lapoint is a former member of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees and served as chair for two years. She was a high school teacher for 11 years and has a master’s degree in education from the University of Bridgeport.

Maine Community College System Board of Trustees

Governor Baldacci has nominated for reappointment five members of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees: Kris Doody of Caribou, Carol Epstein of Bangor, Joanna Jones of Waldoboro, Merle Nelson of Falmouth and Daniel Wathen of Augusta.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Select Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Makes Nominations to Human Rights Commission, Commission on Indigent Legal Services

July 29, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the Maine Human Rights Commission and the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services.

Sallie Chandler of Lebanon is being nominated for reappointment to the Maine Human Rights Commission. Chandler was first appointed to the Commission in 2007. Chandler is the Chief Executive Officer of Chandler Septic Services. She is also a York County Commissioner and for four years she was the Town Clerk of Lebanon.

Marvin Glazier of Bangor and Kenneth Spirer of Portland are being nominated for reappointment to the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services.

Glazier has served on the Commission for one year. For the past 41 years, he has worked at Vafiadas, Brountas and Kominsky, LLP. He is the President of Atrium House, a home for juveniles, and a member of the Bangor Zoning Board. He received his J.D. from Boston University School of Law.

Spirer has also served on the Commission for one year. Currently retired, Spirer held several positions with Merrill Lynch and Co., including First Vice President and Assistant General Counsel. He was also the Assistant Director of the Office of Trading Practices at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. He received his J.D. from New York University School of Law.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Announces Nominations to FAME, MSHA and MRRA

July 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations for the Finance Authority of Maine, the Maine State Housing Authority and the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority.

Finance Authority of Maine

Anthony Armstrong of Cape Elizabeth is being nominated for appointment to the Board of Directors for the Finance Authority of Maine. Armstrong is the owner and President of Maine Home Mortgage Corp. and the owner and President of Properties Northeast Inc. In addition, he has been the Director and Deputy Director of Operations for the Maine Office of Energy Resources. He also was a Development Officer for the Maine State Housing Authority and the Executive Director of the Downeast Housing Development Corporation. He has a master's degree in city planning from Harvard University and a J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law.

The Governor is also nominating four members for reappointment to the Board: Brent Cross of Bangor, Glenn Lamarr of Fort Kent, Patrick Murphy of Portland and Cheri Walker of Falmouth.

Cross is Vice President of Cross Insurance and an adjunct professor at Husson College where he teaches insurance and risk management. Cross received both his M.S. and B.S. degrees from Husson.

Lamarr is the Vice President of Commercial Lending for TD Bank where he is responsible for underwriting and developing new commercial business while servicing the existing customer base. Before joining TD Bank, Lamarr held several positions with Casco Northern Bank, where he served as a Vice President, Manager and District Commercial Lender. He is a graduate of Bates College.

Murphy is the founder and President of Pan Atlantic SMS Group, a market research, management and strategic planning company in Portland. Before that, he worked for nine years with the Irish Trade Board. He has a master's degree in economics from Trinity College, Dublin University.

Walker is the managing principal in the firm Albin, Randall and Bennett, and has extensive experience working with closely held companies. Before joining her current company, she worked at Coopers and Lybrand. She is a Certified Public Accountant. She is a graduate of Bentley College.

Maine State Housing Authority

Sheryl Gregory of Litchfield is being nominated for reappointment to the Maine State Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. She is a real estate broker with Homestead Realty in Winthrop and is a past president of the Maine Association of Realtors. She attended Salem State College in Salem, Mass.

Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority

Sande Updegraph of Brunswick is being nominated for reappointment to the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority Board of Trustees. She is the Executive Director of the Freeport Economic

Development Corp. She is a member of the Economic Development Council of Maine and has served in numerous tourism and business development organizations.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Committee on Business, Research and Economic Development.

A Senate confirmation session has been scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Applauds TD Bank on Job Expansion

July 30, 2010

AUBURN - Governor John E. Baldacci today celebrated the grand opening of TD Bank's Auburn Call Center. The company said eventual staffing at the center could be as high as 500 employees by 2011, bringing its total employment in Maine to nearly 3,000 people.

"With today's grand opening of the Auburn Call Center, TD Bank is strengthening its reputation as a vibrant company and employer in the State of Maine," said Governor John Baldacci. "TD Bank contributes significantly to our economy and is an excellent corporate steward. We in Maine appreciate TD Bank's strong commitment to the State. This is a boost to the economy that will have a ripple effect throughout the region."

The company highlighted the "green" aspects of the new call center facility. Seeking LEED Gold certification, TD Bank will implement practices to reduce electricity and water usage as well as promote recycling. The facility was designed with the health of employees in mind by choosing materials that give off little to no volatile organic compounds.

"Using locally sourced materials and craftsmanship along with following LEED Gold certified standards, TD Bank's Auburn Call Center is a shining example of responsible use of resources. This is something that Mainers really appreciate," said Governor Baldacci.

Governor Announces Judicial Nominees

July 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the Superior and District Courts of Maine.

Governor Baldacci is nominating current District Court Judges MaryGay Kennedy, Ann Murray and Robert Murray for Maine's Superior Court.

Kennedy, of Brunswick, was first appointed to the District Court in 2007. Before joining the District Court, Kennedy was an attorney with Germani and Riggle and McTeague, Higbee, MacAdam, Case, Cohen and Whitney. She was also the Founding Director for the Maine Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program. She received her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law.

Ann Murray, of Bangor, was first appointed to the District Court in 1999. Since 2007, she has served as the Chief Judge of the District Court. Before her appointment, she was an attorney with Richardson, Whitman, Large and Badger and also worked for four years in the Penobscot District Attorney's Office. She received her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law.

Robert Murray, of Bangor, was first appointed in 2004. Before his appointment, he served as the Commissioner of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation. He was also an attorney with Rudman and Winchell and served for four years in the Maine State Senate, where he was the chairman of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice. He also spent four years in the Maine House of Representatives. He received his J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law.

For the District Court, the Governor is nominating Patrick Ende, Bruce Jordan and Susan Oram for appointment.

Ende, of Hallowell, has served for the past two years as Governor Baldacci's Chief Legal Counsel. He has also served as a Senior Policy Advisor for the Governor, covering the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Before joining the administration, Ende was the Litigation Director for Maine Equal Justice Partners. From 1982 until 1998, Ende worked for Pine Tree Legal Assistance, holding a number of positions including Directing Attorney and Staff Attorney. He received his J.D. from New York University School of Law.

Jordan, of Veazie, has served as a Family Law Magistrate since 1998. A Family Law Magistrate is a quasi-judicial officer presiding over parental rights cases, paternity actions, child support and divorces involving children. Before becoming a Magistrate, Jordan was a partner with the law firm of Archer, Perry and Jordan. He received his J.D. from the Franklin Pierce Law Center in Concord, N.H.

Oram, of Auburn, has served as a Family Law Magistrate since 2003. Before becoming a Magistrate, she was a partner with the law firm of Bonneau and Geismar. She was also an associate with Isaacson and Raymond. She received her J.D. from Vermont Law School in South Royalton, Vt.

In addition, the Governor is nominating five judges for reappointment.

Judge Peter Goranites of Cumberland is being nominated for reappointment to the District Court. He was first appointed in 1988. Before his appointment, Goranites was a partner in the law firm Goranites & Libby for 12 years and also served in the Office of the Maine Attorney General for three years.

Judge Charles LaVerdiere of Wilton is being nominated for reappointment to the District Court. He was first appointed in 2003 and is the Deputy Chief Judge for the Maine District Court. Before being appointed to the District Court, LaVerdiere practiced law for 20 years.

Judge Robert Mullen of Waterville is being nominated for reappointment to the District Court. Mullen was first appointed in 1996. Before his appointment, Mullen was a partner at Linnell, Choate and Webster for 17 years.

Judge Bernard O'Mara of Easton is being nominated for reappointment to the District Court. O'Mara was first appointed in 2003. Before his appointment, he was in private practice for 25 years and worked at Pine Tree Legal Assistance for 18 years.

Judge David Griffiths of Presque Isle is being nominated for reappointment as Active Retired Judge for the District Court. He was first appointed in 1988. Before his appointment, Griffiths practiced law in Presque Isle from 1961 until his appointment in 1988. He retired from the District Court in 2003 and was appointed that year as an Active Retired Judge.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Select Committee on the Judiciary. A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Hails Partnerships Leading to Amtrak Expansion to Brunswick

August 2, 2010

BRUNSWICK - Governor John E. Baldacci today joined federal, State, regional and local officials as well as private partners for the beginning of the expansion project for the Amtrak Downeaster passenger rail from Portland to Brunswick. Joining the community event this morning was Joseph Szabo, Administrator of the Federal Rail Road Administration. The State provided \$3 million and the federal government \$35 million of federal Recovery Act monies to fund the project, which includes rehabilitation of rail and ties, upgrades to crossings and signals and construction of passenger platforms in Freeport and Brunswick.

"Expansion of the Downeaster has been a priority of my Administration, but we knew we couldn't do it alone," said Governor Baldacci. "The partnerships represented today have been critical in realizing the promise of expanded passenger rail service to Brunswick. Along with the help from the Recovery Act, Maine has been meeting the challenge of the recession through smart investments, frugal spending and by holding the line on taxes."

The Amtrak Downeaster is a bright star nationally in passenger rail. Since it began operation in December 2001, the Downeaster has welcomed more than 3 million passengers. This past fiscal year saw record-breaking ridership.

"Enhancing our infrastructure has never been more important," said the Governor. "Expanded service benefits our economy by attracting more tourists. It will improve access to midcoast Maine by connecting to the Maine Eastern Railroad in Brunswick. It gets more cars and trucks off our roads, reducing congestion and keeping the environment in this beautiful area clean. It will further encourage development in this region and stimulate jobs and investments. And working with all our partners, we will reach Brunswick and open the gateway for further expansion."

The Governor also recognized Maine's Congressional Delegation, whose work was critical in passing the Recovery Act, which in part funds this project. He noted the support of the Maine Legislature and local and regional officials who have worked so hard in the face of Brunswick Naval Air Station's closing to invest wisely and plan for the economic redevelopment of the area.

Governor Baldacci also credited the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, which operates the Downeaster, the Maine Department of Transportation and Pan Am Railways.

"The investment is especially important as we work to redevelop Brunswick Naval Air Station, and will benefit the entire midcoast region and State," Governor Baldacci said.

Governor Announces Nominations for University of Maine System Board of Trustees, Maine Maritime Academy Trustees

August 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated two people for appointment to the University of Maine System Board of Trustees and one person for appointment to the Maine Maritime Academy Board of Trustees.

The Governor has nominated Kurt Adams of Yarmouth for appointment to the University of Maine System Board of Trustees. The Governor also has nominated Marjorie Medd of Norway for reappointment.

Adams is Vice President for First Wind, an independent wind energy company. Before joining First Wind, he was the chairman of the Maine Public Utilities Commission and Governor Baldacci's Chief Legal Counsel. He received his law degree from the University of Maine School of Law.

In addition to serving on the Board of Trustees for five years, Medd served for 10 years on the State Board of Education and has a long career of public service.

The Governor is also nominating Morten Arntzen of New Canaan, Conn., for appointment to the Maine Maritime Board of Trustees.

Arntzen is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Overseas Shipbuilding Group. Before joining his current company, Arntzen was the CEO for American Marine Advisors Inc., a U.S.-based merchant banking firm specializing in maritime industry merger and acquisition advisory work.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

A Senate confirmation hearing is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Baldacci Nominates David Littell to Maine's Public Utilities Commission

August 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated David Littell, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, for appointment to the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

“The PUC plays a critical role in protecting the interests of the people of Maine,” Governor Baldacci said. “David has demonstrated his ability to fairly navigate complex regulatory and environmental issues. During his tenure, he has made the DEP more business-friendly without compromising Maine’s environment. He is deeply analytical, with a sharp legal mind, and he has been a staunch defender of Maine’s environment. He is a problem solver and creative thinker, and he will bring the right balance of regulatory experience, expertise and insight to the Commission.”

Littell has been DEP Commissioner for five years and served as Deputy Commissioner for two. Before joining the Department, he was an attorney for 11 years with Pierce Atwood, where he practiced environmental law, specializing in hazardous waste cleanups, project permitting and wireless communications.

During his time at DEP, Littell has led numerous initiatives, including the protection of significant wildlife habitats and Maine’s shoreland areas, implementation of the Kid Safe Product Act and the Maine Air Toxics Initiative, and led Maine’s efforts to address climate change through state-leadership, regional collaboration and cooperation with states across the country from as far away as Washington, Oregon and California to our neighbors in New England.

He is currently the Chair of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, the only greenhouse gas market-based regulatory system in the United States. He served on Maine’s Energy Conservation Board, which worked to implement energy efficiency programs statewide.

In addition, Littell has led internal innovations within DEP designed to lower costs and increase environmental protections while also creating permitting flexibility mechanisms, which have streamlined the process for applicants. During Littell’s time at DEP and during the Baldacci Administration, the Department has permitted \$5.2 billion of capital investment in Maine.

Littell served nine years as an intelligence officer with the United States Navy Reserves.

In 2010, he was honored by the University of Maine as its Distinguished Policy Scholar and has won numerous local, regional and national honors. Littell received his J.D. from Harvard Law School and an A.B. from Princeton University.

The nomination will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Nominates Members to Board of Environmental Protection and Efficiency Maine Trust

August 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the Board of Environmental Protection and the Efficiency Maine Trust.

Paul Paydos of Dover-Foxcroft is being nominated for appointment to the Maine Board of Environmental Protection. Paydos is retired, but was employed for more than 28 years by Guilford of Maine, which produces fabrics to furniture manufacturers, remanufacturers and makes of other products, including acoustical panels. About 98 percent of the panel fabrics produced are made entirely of recycled polyester of bio-based yarns. Paydos held a number of positions with the company, including Vice President of Materials Management, Vice President of Operations and Vice President of Technical Services, where he was responsible for engineering, environmental management, purchasing, capital expenditures and technical laboratories.

Paydos' has served on State Pollution Prevention Advisory Board and was co-chairman of the State Smart Production Initiative. He led Guilford of Maine's efforts to become a Charter Member of the EPA Performance Track Program. He also led the company's work on developing a chemical protocol, which involved a detailed study of all chemical substances used in Guilford's facilities to determine toxicity issues, pollution potential and possible substitutes.

This nomination will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Efficiency Maine Trust Governor Baldacci is nominating James Atwell of Falmouth and John Rohman of Bangor for reappointment to the Efficiency Maine Trust.

Atwell has more than 30 years experience in the field of civil and environmental engineering. He is currently a Senior Project Manager with Sevee and Maher Engineers. He received both a B.S. and M.S. in civil engineering from the University of Maine.

Rohman is the Chairman of the Board for BBRC Architects and a former Mayor and City Councilman from Bangor. He received his B.S. in Business Administration from Husson College and a B.S. in civil engineering from the University of Maine.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Announces Nominations to Quality of Place Council

August 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated six people for appointment to the Maine Quality of Place Council.

The Maine Quality of Place Council was established in statute during the second session of the 124th Legislature to develop the link between Maine's economic prosperity and its quality of place, including the state's artistic, cultural, historic, downtown, natural and workforce resources.

Edward Barrett of Lewiston has served for four years on the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality Places, the predecessor of the Maine Quality of Place Council. He is currently the City Administrator for Lewiston. Prior to that, he served for 21 years as the City Manager of Bangor.

Richard Barringer of Portland is a Research Professor at the Muskie School of Public Service and a Senior Fellow, New England Environmental Finance Center. He has served as the Chair of Governor's Council on Maine's Quality Places.

Eleanor Kinney is a public policy and conservation advocate and community volunteer, whose work includes the advocacy for the Maine Informed Growth Act. She was a member of the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality Places.

Ryan Pelletier of Ft. Kent Mills is the Director of Workforce Development for the Northern Maine Development Commission. Before taking that position, he was the Town Manager of St. Agatha for 11 years.

Robert Thompson of Litchfield is the Executive Director of the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments. Before joining AVCOG, he was the Director of Development for Lewiston. He was a member of the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality Places.

Robin Zinchuk of Bethel is the Executive Director of the Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce. She also served on the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality Places.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Business, Research and Economic Development.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Maine Boat Builder Receives Boat of the Year Award

August 3, 2010

TRENTON - Governor John E. Baldacci joined Morris Yachts officials and employees to celebrate the boat builder receiving the 2010 Best Boat of the Year, Bristol Award, by Cruising World magazine.

"This award reflects well on all of Maine's boat building industry and the State," said the Governor.

"Shipbuilding is woven into the cultural and economic fabric of Maine and remains an important employer. People around the globe recognize the reputation of Maine-built boats, and Morris Yachts plays an important role in Maine's tradition and economy."

The State has worked with Maine boat builders to increase its visibility internationally and develop new opportunities. The State of Maine partnered with companies to establish Maine Built Boats to help market the industry.

Through our expertise in composites that started with boat building, Maine is becoming known as a center for composite technology. Composites are now a part of Maine's transportation infrastructure and energy future.

Late last month, Kestrel Aircraft announced it has chosen to manufacture its new composite turboprop aircraft at Brunswick Landing. Kestrel officials credited Maine's leadership in composite technology and experienced workforce as critical factors in the decision to locate to Maine. The Maine Advanced Technology and Engineering Center in Brunswick, a new partnership of Southern Maine Community College and the University of Maine, will ensure training in composites continues in the State.

Governor Announces Nominations to the Gambling Control Board, MRDA, LDA and WCDA

August 3, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Matthew Dyer for appointment to the Maine Gambling Control Board. He also nominated Joseph Laliberte for reappointment.

Dyer, of Augusta, is a general partner in Dyer and Gustafson. Before going into private practice, he served as an Assistant Attorney General in Maine and as a Special Assistant to the Attorney General for the New York State Special Prosecutor's Office. He has also been a Special Counsel for the Board of Overseers of the Bar and for the Maine Superior Court. He was a faculty member at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy for five years and has also been an Adjunct Professor at the University of Maine, Augusta. He received his B.S. from the University of Bridgeport and his J.D. from New York Law School.

Laliberte, of Lewiston, is retired. He is the former Chief Executive Officer for Corporate Intelligence Inc., which conducted investigations for the legal community, insurance industry and corporations. He is the former Sheriff of Androscoggin County and has an extensive military career that includes being a Special Agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations where he managed anti-terrorism, counterintelligence and protective service operations among other duties. He was also the Chief of Police for Sabattus. He served in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs.

In addition, the Governor has announced the following appointments:

Maine Rural Development Authority: Connie Russell of Rockport and Tommy Thornton of Milford to the Maine Rural Development Authority Board of Trustees.

Loring Development Authority: George Ezzy of Augusta and David King of Limestone.

Washington County Development Authority: Betsy Fitzgerald of Machiasport, James Whalen of Machias and Michael Radeka of Whiting.

These nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Business, Research and Economic Development.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

State Agencies Closed Friday, August 6

August 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, Aug. 6, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, August 6, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part
SSS: http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the second of 10 State government closure days in Fiscal Year 2011, which began July 1, 2010.

The eight remaining closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Friday, September 3, 2010

Friday, October 8, 2010

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Governor Baldacci Praises Vote by Sens. Snowe and Collins to Extend Medicaid and Education Funding

August 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement after the U.S. Senate cloture vote to extend Medicaid funding and provide additional education support for States still struggling to recover from the recession.

“Senators Snowe and Collins today cast a critical vote for jobs, for health care and for education,” Governor Baldacci said. “Their action today will have a profound impact on Maine as our State works to recover from the worst recession since the Great Depression. It will mean better health care for our people and a stronger education system for our children.”

If finally enacted by the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, and signed by the President, the legislation will provide significant assistance to States, including Maine.

The legislation is projected to provide Maine increased Medicaid funding of approximately \$77 million and to provide an additional \$39 million to protect teaching jobs in Maine.

“I know that this has been a difficult issue in Washington as the Senate has worked to provide assistance to states while at the same time protecting the long-term sustainability of the federal budget. This legislation is balanced to protect jobs today, which is critical. But it is also paid for and won’t increase the federal deficit over the long run.”

Governor Seeks to Raise Awareness of Asian Longhorned Beetle Danger

August 5, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci joined officials from the Maine Department of Agriculture, the Maine Department of Conservation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture and members of the Maine Legislature and volunteers to proclaim August as Asian Longhorned Beetle Awareness Month.

"The Asian Longhorned Beetle poses a significant threat to our forests and our agricultural economy, and our citizens and visitors are the best defense against its spread," said Governor Baldacci. "Early detection is key to ensuring the health of Maine's forests."

The Asian Longhorned Beetle attacks hardwood trees essential to Maine's forests, landscapes and economy: maples, birch, ash, mountain ash, poplar, willow, elm, horse chestnut and others. Maples are the most often infested species.

The Asian Longhorned Beetle is native to China and was detected in Worcester, Mass. in 2008. The insect has been found in a number of trees in Boston this year.

There are 17 million acres of forest in Maine to protect. Maine is one of 11 states involved in survey and outreach efforts funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Because of the dangers of infestation to Maine's economy and landscape, legislators passed and the Governor signed into law this year a ban on firewood coming from outside the State. The State is developing regulations to restrict the movement of out of state firewood. Firewood brought into Maine is a pathway for forest pests including Asian long horned beetle.

"The potential spread of the Asian Longhorned Beetle is alarming," said Rep. Jeff McCabe, D-Skowhegan, who sponsored the law to prohibit the transport of out-state fire wood to Maine's forests. "Educating the public about the threat is a crucial step to protecting our forests, which support our state's economy and lifestyle."

The text of the Proclamation follows.

WHEREAS, Maine has 17 million acres of forested land and half is comprised of hardwood trees that enhance the state's air and water quality, natural landscapes, recreational destinations, wildlife habitats, property values, and the forest and agricultural economy through timber harvesting, maple syrup production and landscape tree sales; and

WHEREAS, many of the trees that beautify urban streets are hardwood trees. These trees help residents reduce heating and cooling costs by shielding homes from the harsh heat of summer and bitter cold of winter, and reduce air pollution and carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, in August 2008, the Asian Longhorned Beetle, a destructive non-native invasive beetle, was discovered to be destroying hardwood trees in Worcester, MA, and had previously been found in New York, Illinois and New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Asian Longhorned Beetle has already killed tens of thousands of hardwood trees in these four states, and damage may reach into the billions of dollars if the beetle is not eradicated; and

WHEREAS, efforts undertaken in Maine as well as in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont in partnership with private and nonprofit organizations, universities, and local, state and federal government, are helping to protect the billions of threatened hardwood trees in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Maine has been proactive in preventing the introduction of the Asian Longhorned Beetle, through outreach, education and surveys; and

WHEREAS, all Mainers have a responsibility to stop the introduction of the Asian longhorned beetle by remaining vigilant; halting transport of firewood, nursery trees, or logs from quarantined areas; and increasing their understanding and awareness of the Asian Longhorned Beetle and its severe potential impacts on the environment and economy,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim the month of August, 2010 as

ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Governor Mourns Passing of Matthew Simmons

August 9, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today learned of the death of Matthew Simmons of North Haven. Simmons was a leading energy investment banker, a former energy advisor to President George W. Bush, an author and the driving force behind the Ocean Energy Institute, based in Rockland, Maine. The Ocean Energy Institute (OEI), founded by Simmons in 2007, is a nonprofit think-tank and venture capital fund dedicated to expanding offshore energy through research and development.

"Matt Simmons was an innovative thinker who pushed ideas that have the potential to yield a more environmentally and economically sustainable future for Maine and the world," said Governor Baldacci. "I visited Matt and his team last month and thanked them for their partnership with the State as we aggressively build an independent energy future for Maine. Our State has been viewed as a leader in alternative energy in part because of the groundbreaking work spearheaded by Matt Simmons and the Ocean Energy Institute. His leadership and commitment to a better world will be missed, and we need to continue Matt's work and vision as a way to honor him. Matt was also a kind and generous man. At this difficult time, we send our deepest sympathies to his family."

Simmons is the author of the 2005 book "Twilight in the Desert: The Coming Saudi Oil Shock and the World Economy," which laid out an argument of peak oil, that the world was approaching peak oil production. Simmons believed that to meet future energy needs, we need to look beyond fossil fuels and to develop energy by harnessing our vast natural resources in a responsible way. He met with the Governor a number of times and the Ocean Energy Institute is a part of the consortium led by the University of Maine that has received millions of dollars from the federal government to research and develop offshore wind turbines. Governor Baldacci also recognized Matt Simmons' leadership during his State of the State address delivered earlier this year.

Governor Announces Nominations to the State Board of Corrections

August 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Randall Liberty for appointment and Timothy King for reappointment to the State Board of Corrections.

Liberty, of Benton, is the Sherriff of Kennebec County and will serve in the seat reserved for a nominee of the Maine Sheriffs Association. He has been with the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office for 21 years, also serving as Chief Deputy, Staff Sergeant, Sergeant and Patrol Deputy. Liberty was a Corrections Officer with the Somerset County Sheriff's Office. Prior to this, he was a reserve police officer with the Fairfield Police Department, while also serving in the U.S. Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserves. He is a Vice President of the Maine Sheriffs Association. Liberty is a graduate of the University of Maine at Augusta.

King, of Ellsworth, is the Executive Director of the Washington Hancock Community Agency. Prior to this, he served as City Manager of Ellsworth, Town Manager of Oakland, Corinth and Westerly, R.I., and Town Administrator of Auburn, Mass. He currently serves as Vice President of the Maine Community Action Association, as well as on the Board of Visitors of the Washington County Corrections Facility. King has served on the State Board of Corrections as a public representative since 2008. He is a graduate of the University of Maine at Orono and holds a master's degree in public administration from Penn State University.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Announces Nominations to the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices

August 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Michael Healy for appointment and Walter McKee for reappointment to the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices.

Michael Healy of Freeport is being nominated for appointment to the Commission. Healy was recommended by Maine House of Representatives Minority Leader Josh Tardy. Healy is an attorney with Verrill Dana, where he practices litigation, administrative law and in the firm's Legislative departments. He received his J.D. from Boston University School of Law and his A.B. from Brown University.

Walter McKee of Hallowell is being nominated for reappointment to the Commission. McKee was recommended by Speaker of the House Hannah Pingree. McKee is a criminal defense, personal injury and general litigation attorney with Lipman, Katz and McKee. He also served in as a Captain in the Maine National Guard, Judge Advocate General's Corps. He received his J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law and his B.A. from the University of Maine.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs.

A Senate Confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Announces Nominations to Loring Development Authority

August 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today nominated Patrick Paradis for appointment to the Loring Development Authority.

Paradis, of Augusta, joins George Ezzy of Augusta and David King of Limestone, who were nominated for appointment to the Authority on Aug. 3.

Paradis is a retired Staff Development Specialist who worked in the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. He was also the Treasurer of Kennebec County and an instructor at the University of Maine at Augusta in the Department of Business and Governmental Sciences. He is currently a member of the Augusta City Council and a former member of the Maine Legislature, including service as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

These nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Business, Research and Economic Development.

A Senate confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

State Offers Web-Based Tool for Accessing Federal Health Care Reform Information

August 10, 2010

AUGUSTA - The Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance announced today a new tool for Maine people to learn more about the federal health care reform law passed earlier this year. The Web site, www.maine.gov/healthreform, provides a central place for Mainers to review up-to-date information about the federal health reform law, The Affordable Care Act, and how it impacts Maine. The site includes links to federal and State agencies, the Maine Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Health Reform and other information sources.

"The federal health care reform law provides new opportunities for Maine to cover more uninsured and address the cost and quality of health care," said Trish Riley, Director of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance. "This Web site will help Mainers become familiar with these opportunities and see what actions the State is taking in response to the new law."

The new federal law includes significant new responsibilities for states. In April, Governor Baldacci issued an Executive Order creating a Steering Committee on Health Reform to begin examining the law. Comprised of key State officials, the Steering Committee meets publicly and using independent consultants conducts analysis of the new law and its implications for Maine.

Maine's 2010-2012 State Health Plan calls for the Steering Committee on Health Reform and the Advisory Council on Health Systems Development (a stakeholder group) to provide their analysis of options of the federal law and make recommendations to the in-coming Administration and the Joint Select Committee on Health Reform. Materials from these meetings are available on the Web site.

"The Affordable Care Act requires states to start planning now and provides numerous funding opportunities, now and in the future, many related to improving the efficiency of health care," said Riley. "Our goal is to engage the public and key stakeholders in examining the law and laying out options for in-coming policymakers. The new Web site, while a work in progress, is a step in that outreach."

For more information on Maine's work to advance the federal health care reform law, visit www.maine.gov/healthreform

Governor Announces Nominations to Interagency Review Panel

August 10, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations for the Interagency Review Panel.

The Interagency Review Panel was established as part of L.D. 1786 to oversee the use and designation of potential energy corridors.

The Panel includes:

The Director of the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security; The Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services or designee; The Commissioner of each department or the director of any other State agency or authority that owns or controls land or assets with the statutory corridor under consideration; Four members of the public appointed by the Governor, subject to review by the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy and Senate confirmation, and which fit the following criteria: One member with expertise in energy and utilities selected from candidates nominated by the President of the Senate; One member with expertise in real estate or finance selected from candidates nominated by the President of the Senate; One member representing industrial or commercial energy consumers selected from candidates nominated by the Speaker of the House; and One member representing residential energy consumers selected from candidates nominated by the Speaker of the House.

Barbara Alexander of Winthrop was recommended by Senate President Libby Mitchell as someone with expertise in energy and utilities. Alexander is a consumer affairs consultant, specializing in energy policy. For 10 years, Alexander was the Director of the Consumer Assistance Division of the Maine Public Utilities Commission, and for four years served as the Superintendent of the Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation. She earned her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law and her B.A. from the University of Michigan.

Timothy Agnew of Yarmouth was recommended by President Mitchell as someone with expertise in finance. Agnew is a principal with Masthead Venture Partners, a venture capital firm and licensed Small Business Investment Company focusing on early state investments in information technology companies. From 1987 to 1999, Agnew was the Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine. He received his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and his B.A. from Vassar College.

Harrison Horning of Falmouth was recommended by Speaker of the House Hannah Pingree to represent industrial or commercial energy consumers. Horning is the Director of Facilities and Energy for Hannaford Bros. Co., where he is responsible for energy management for more than 165 stores in five states. Before his current position, he was also the Energy Manager for the company, the Manager of Engineering and Architectural Services for the University of Southern Maine and a Staff Engineer with Central Maine Power. He has an M.S. in engineering from the University of Arizona and a B.S. in nuclear engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y.

Fenwick Fowler of Farmington was recommended by Speaker Pingree to represent residential energy consumers. Fowler is the Executive Director of Western Maine Community Action, where he has worked for 35 years. During his tenure, Fowler has worked to expand housing opportunities in Western Maine and to expand access to health care, job training and child development services. He also established the Rural Institute on Poverty. He received his B.A. from the University of Maine at Farmington.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy.

A Senate Confirmation session is scheduled for Aug. 25.

Governor Praises Maine's U.S. Representatives in House Vote to Extend Assistance to Education, the Elderly and Disabled

August 10, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today praised U.S. Representatives Michael Michaud and Chellie Pingree for their vote to support extending federal funds that will help thousands of Maine families as well as the elderly and people with disabilities. When signed into law by the President, Maine will receive approximately \$77 million in additional Medicaid funds. In addition, the legislation finally passed today by the House will provide an expected \$39 million to protect teaching jobs in Maine.

“With this vote, critical funds will enable the State of Maine to preserve the valuable safety net for the most vulnerable and help keep teachers in our classrooms,” said Governor Baldacci. “This federal help is responsibly paid for and will provide relief for Maine families and communities at a time when it is greatly needed.”

The Governor also thanked Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins for exhibiting true bipartisanship by supporting the federal relief package.

“Maine people should be proud of the work of their entire Congressional Delegation. Without their support, this legislation would not have been possible,” said the Governor. “Maine’s Senators, in particular, took a principled stand to help stabilize our economy and help hard working Maine families during this prolonged recession.”

The Governor reminded Maine people that much hard work remains.

“While this relief from the federal government is welcome, important work to streamline services on the State level must continue,” said the Governor. “The State must continue the difficult work of balancing the budget during these tough economic times.”

Governor Mourns Death of Former State Representative Heidrich

August 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned of the death of former State Representative Theodore H. Heidrich. He passed away last night.

Former Rep. Heidrich served in the Maine House from 1999 to 2004 (119th, 120th and 121st Legislatures). He represented Oxford, Mechanic Falls, Otisfield and part of Hebron.

“Ted was a thoughtful man and principled legislator,” Governor Baldacci said. “He will be missed.”

The Governor spoke with former Rep. Heidrich’s wife, Eleanor, and expressed his condolences.

Governor Baldacci said he will order flags flown at half-staff in Oxford, Mechanic Falls, Otisfield and Hebron on the day of Heidrich’s funeral. No further information is available at this time.

Governor and First Lady Participate in “Read with ME.” Initiative

August 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci and First Lady Karen Baldacci today highlighted the importance of early childhood reading at a book bag-assembling project for the literacy outreach program Read With ME. The First Lady, who is a former kindergarten teacher, spearheads Maine Reads, the umbrella organization for Read With ME.

“Books are among the most important tools to a child’s development,” said Governor Baldacci. “Education and literacy are keys to our State’s future.”

Joined by Maine author and illustrator Chris Van Dusen and Pam Joy, Vice President of Community Affairs for FairPoint Communications and dozens of volunteers, 18,500 book bags were prepared to be distributed to incoming kindergarten students in more than 400 schools throughout Maine, as well as participating homeschoolers. Through Read With ME., every kindergartner in the State has the opportunity to receive a book bag, which includes a copy of this year’s featured book *The Circus Ship*, which was written and illustrated by Van Dusen, a Camden resident.

All of the books and information are provided at no cost to the participating schools and students, thanks to the generous underwriting of the Read With ME. program by FairPoint Communications. FairPoint Technicians and members of the Maine Army National Guard are among the volunteers delivering books to the schools, swelling the program’s volunteer number to almost 100.

The Circus Ship is a fictional, lighthearted account of a true maritime event. The book is based on the tragic sinking of the *Royal Tar*, which sank in Maine’s Fox Islands Thoroughfare. The 160-foot side-wheeler steamship burned on Oct. 25, 1836. She was carrying a full circus, including a collection of serpents, birds, an elephant, a tiger, a zebra and six horses, two lionesses, a gnu and an assortment of other wild beasts. They, along with a full brass band, were headed to a show in Portland, when disaster struck.

Van Dusen has taken this tragic tale as the seed for his own tale of a circus ship sinking, giving it humor, rhyme and a happy ending. *The Circus Ship* is the recipient of this year’s Lupine Award by the Maine Library Association.

The Circus Ship has been specially designed and reissued for Read With ME. to include additional pages with activities for young readers and literacy information. Each child will also receive a bookmark developed by the Maine Department of Education and illustrated by Van Dusen.

Each school will receive for their library a CD entitled “Power Up for Reading,” which is produced nationally for teachers by Telecom Pioneers and generously donated to the Maine schools by the FairPoint Pioneers, a locally-based service organization.

In addition, a clip of the First Lady reading from the book with the words captioned at the bottom will be put on the Web site of Maine Reads www.mainereads.org so that children may read along with the First

Lady. This online addition is part of the FairPoint Communications Digital Enrichment program and also includes an interview with the author/illustrator.

Each year the featured book is selected by a committee of educators, parents, teachers, librarians, literacy professionals and authors.

"In the 11 year existence of Read With ME., countless children have treasured the books and shared them with family and friends. We greatly appreciate the ongoing support of FairPoint Communications, which makes it all possible," said the First Lady.

Through their support of Maine Reads, FairPoint Communications has awarded Read With ME. a \$50,000 grant to help underwrite the program and provide all of the books and information at no cost to the schools and students. Maine Reads is one of the local community programs supported by FairPoint. For more information log onto www.mainereads.org

Governor Baldacci Submits Application for Additional Federal Education Funding

August 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today submitted Maine's application for \$39 million in federal funds from the Education Jobs and Medicaid Assistance Act approved by Congress and signed by President Obama last week.

"These funds will flow quickly to school districts throughout Maine and will help protect teaching and other education jobs, and preserve the quality of education in our schools at a difficult financial time," Governor Baldacci said. "This funding will help local school districts save jobs today, and can be carried over to next year, providing further financial assistance to schools."

The funds can be used to rehire, avoid layoffs, restore furlough days and other salary-related items for teachers, principals, librarians, food service personnel, bus drivers and other school positions that provide school-level educational and related services.

The program allows funds to be used by school districts before the end of September 2012. Because schools have already made budget decisions for the current year, some may choose to use some of the funds to help address anticipated reductions next school year, when federal Recovery Act funds are no longer available. It will be up to school boards and administrators to make those decisions locally.

The legislation gives states two options for distributing the additional funding: through state funding formulas or through the federal Title 1 funding formula.

"As we have been forced to make reductions in General Purpose Aid for education, we have used our state funding formula," Governor Baldacci said. "The most equitable way to distribute these new resources is through that same formula."

Maine's application will be reviewed and approved quickly and funds are expected to flow to Maine within two weeks of approval of the application. States have until Sept. 9 to apply, but Governor Baldacci said he wanted to move sooner than that.

"We know that schools have had to make difficult choices this past year, and they will be asked to do that again next year," Governor Baldacci said. "We need to give them every available resource as quickly as possible to allow them to work in the best interests of their employees and students."

Schools will be required to report on the use of the funds using the same guidelines as with Recovery Act funds to streamline the reporting process.

Information on the funds and their distribution can be found at www.ed.gov/programs/educationjobsfund

and on the Maine Department of Education website:

www.maine.gov/education.

Governor Swears in Tim Glidden as Acting Director of the Maine State Planning Office

August 23, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci this afternoon swore in Tim Glidden as Acting Director of the Maine State Planning Office. The State Planning Office, part of the Executive Department, provides independent analysis to the Governor and the Maine Legislature on the development of the State's economy and conservation of natural resources.

"I am pleased to have Tim's expertise and leadership," said Governor Baldacci. "He brings great professionalism and integrity to this position and has earned a reputation over the past few years through his work spearheading Land for Maine's Future."

Glidden takes over the top job at the State Planning Office after the departure of Martha Freeman, who left to take a position at the University of Southern Maine.

Glidden received a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Colby College and an M.F.S. in Forestry Sciences from Yale University. Glidden's career in State government includes serving as a Principal Legislative Analyst in the Maine Legislature's Office of Policy and Legal Analysis. Since 2001, Glidden has served as Director of the Land for Maine's Future program and co-leader of the Natural Resource and Energy Team at the Maine State Planning Office. Glidden has also been the Deputy Director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

For more information about the State Planning Office, visit <http://www.maine.gov/spo/>

Governor Recognizes Tidal Power Generation Operation in Eastport

August 24, 2010

EASTPORT – Governor John E. Baldacci today celebrated Ocean Renewable Power Company's successful generation of energy through the use of tidal currents in Cobscook Bay. The company is partnering with the University of Maine and the U.S. Coast Guard and has received financial support from the State's Maine Technology Institute and the U.S. Department of Energy.

"Maine is on an aggressive track toward energy independence," said Governor Baldacci. "The ocean energy industry in Maine is already showing tangible results through Ocean Renewable Power Company's work here in Eastport and private investment is occurring, leading the way for other ocean energy projects to follow."

The Governor joined Congressman Michael Michaud, other state, local and federal officials and leadership of Ocean Renewable Power Company (ORPC) to celebrate the operation of the Coast Guard station using power generated by tidal energy. With help of the University of Maine, the Ocean Renewable Power Company plans to monitor the system's impact on the neighboring marine environment and obtain energy generation performance test results.

The Governor said that the tidal project at Eastport is an important component of Maine's efforts to promote clean, renewable power development.

"This is the right choice for the State: decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels by harnessing our natural resources, creating valuable jobs here at home, and preserving our environment and quality of life," said Governor Baldacci. "I established the Ocean Energy Task Force to improve and update Maine laws so that we could realize the potential for harnessing energy from these vast renewable resources. This is really the first wave of ocean energy development and there's more to come. What is happening here in Eastport and Washington County is the real life implementation of the Ocean Energy Task Force."

According to company officials, ORPC is advancing its underwater power systems for grid-connection in 2011.

In July, Governor Baldacci signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter to work cooperatively on renewable ocean electricity generation, focusing on tidal energy and offshore wind energy. The Governor said working with other regional partners is vital to Maine's ability to develop and transmit energy.

The Governor also credited the strong public and private partnerships that are critical to Maine's success in reaching its renewable energy goals.

"With tidal power generated here and by continuing to work on bio-fuels and bio-mass electricity generation, the development of solar, wind and hydropower, and other innovative ways to produce

renewable energy, we are on our way to building a sustainable energy future for our State,” said the Governor.

Maine Gets Approval for Plan to Expand Health Information Technology

August 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci announced that Maine has won approval from the Federal government for the full use of its grant of nearly \$6.6 million to expand and coordinate health information technology throughout the State.

Maine is only the sixth state in the country to have its implementation plan approved by the Office of the National Coordinator, the office of the federal Department of Health and Human Services that spearheads coordination of advancement of health information technology across the country.

“This approval reflects Maine’s leadership in developing strategies to advance electronic medical records and, through the nonprofit Health InfoNet, assure that such information can be readily available all across the state whenever and wherever a patient and her provider needs access to it,” said Governor Baldacci. “Electronic exchange of information speeds access to care, avoids unnecessary, costly repeat tests and helps prevent medical mistakes.”

In March, the federal government announced that Maine qualified for nearly \$6.6 million over four years in Recovery Act funds for expanding its plan to expand health information technology. A small portion of funds were available immediately, with the remaining funds contingent on the approval from the federal Office of the National Coordinator.

Also in March, the federal government awarded \$4.7 million in Recovery Act funds to HealthInfoNet, the State’s designated health information exchange. Those funds provide support for health care providers who adopt health information technology in their practice.

Maine has been in the forefront of increasing quality and efficiency in health care delivery. In April, the Governor created the Office of the State Coordinator for Health Information Technology by Executive Order. The Order also established a Health Information Steering Committee that will advise the Coordinator.

For more information on the federal health information technology grant and goals toward improving patient care, visit http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/community/healthithsgov_home/1204

Governor Announces \$300,000 for the Maine Commission for Community Service to fund Grants to Engage More Volunteers

August 25, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci announced a \$300,000 grant to the Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS) to recruit, manage, and retain more volunteers to address pressing local needs in Maine. The grant was awarded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, through its Volunteer Generation Fund, a new program authorized by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act to expand opportunities for more Americans to serve while enhancing the capacity of nonprofits to have a sustained impact in local communities.

"Maine people count on volunteers and volunteer programs to complement the work of government in providing essential services to Maine's communities," said Governor Baldacci. "Young and old, Mainers hear the call and are willing to serve their communities because taking care of each other is what being a Mainer is all about. This strength – citizens engaged in community volunteer service – is something we cherish."

The Maine Commission for Community Service will use the grant to create volunteer connector organizations to increase volunteer engagement of youth, young adults, and individuals over 55 in activities addressing local energy and health needs while building capacity in volunteer programs.

The grant will also be used to establish peer networks to foster collaboration and peer support among managers of volunteers. In addition, the Commission will provide increased access to training opportunities for managers of volunteers.

The Maine Commission for Community Service has a long history of serving as a catalyst in solving challenges that face Maine's volunteer sector and building effective partnerships. The grant proposal was written in collaboration with VolunteerMaine Partners, Maine HEARTH partners, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies and participants in peer-to-peer networks of managers of volunteers. The Volunteer Generation Fund will provide MCCS with resources to establish a strong and consistent infrastructure to support volunteers in Maine. Information on how local organizations can apply for a share of the funds will be available in Fall 2010 on <http://www.maineservicecommission.gov/>

"Service is how we tap into the best of the American character," said Patrick A. Corvington, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "Although Americans are volunteering more than ever, we must provide organizations with the tools and resources they need to attract and retain volunteers to solve the critical issues in their communities. The Volunteer Generation Fund will provide those critical resources."

To learn more about the Maine Commission for Community Service visit our web-site at www.maineservicecommission.gov

Governor Applauds Vote in Gouldsboro

August 25, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today applauded the members of the Gouldsboro Board of Selectmen for their initial support for the development of a lobster processing facility in Prospect Harbor.

“The members of the Board of Selectmen have an obligation to look out for the best interests of their community, and they take that work seriously,” Governor Baldacci said. “I’m grateful that they were willing to listen and gather more information about Live Lobster’s plans to develop a seafood processing facility in Prospect Harbor.”

In a 4-0 vote with one abstention, the Selectmen agreed to take an initial step in the application process in support of a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant, which would help Live Lobster purchase the equipment necessary to begin processing lobsters at the former Bumble Bee sardine plant in Prospect Harbor and restore lost jobs. The Selectman reversed an earlier decision in which they had declined to sign a letter of intent for the grant.

“Live Lobster has a solid business plan that will put people back to work and strengthen the economy in the region,” Governor Baldacci said. “While there’s still work to be done, this initial support from the community is critical.”

Governor Celebrates Partnering Agreement Between Maine Company and Boeing

August 26, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Scott Bolduc, President and CEO of Bolduc Technology Group, and officials from Boeing Defense, Space & Security for the announcement of a partnership between the two companies. Surrounded by Augusta area local, State and business officials, the company officials said that they will work together to provide remote-operated ground vehicles for commercial or military use.

"First and foremost, this new relationship speaks to the world-class technology and workforce that exists right here in Maine," said Governor Baldacci. "Through the work of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and the City of Augusta and State incentives like the Pine Tree Zone program, Scott Bolduc successfully relocated his company from another state to Maine last year. He's providing good jobs here in the region and using other Maine businesses to support his work. Today's announcement has the promise to grow Scott's business and new jobs."

The Governor said Maine has an aggressive commitment to support new technologies and innovation.

"Through incentives such as the Pine Tree Zone program, for example, we are supporting growth in targeted business sectors to support Maine businesses, creating quality jobs for Maine people, strengthening our economy and keeping Maine competitive in the global economy," said the Governor.

Bolduc Technology Group is the worldwide leader of advanced adaptive mobility controls. Scott Bolduc began his company to help people with disabilities maintain their mobility through the development of "drive-by-wire" technology and applications.

Bolduc Technology Group began in Auburn, Maine, but moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Last year, the company relocated to Augusta, Maine.

For more information on Maine's Pine Tree Zone program, please visit <http://www.mainebiz.org/pinetreezones/default.asp>

Governor Issues Statement on Auction of Moosehead Furniture

August 31, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci issued the following statement today at the close of the auction of Moosehead Furniture in Monson. The new property owner, Maine businesswoman Louise Jonaitis, offered the successful \$1.1 million bid for the property.

“This is good news for the community,” said Governor Baldacci. “I am pleased with the new owner’s business plan, which has the promise of growing jobs with its successful implementation. My office and I provided assistance to Ms. Jonaitis and her team to get to this important point and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development will continue to work with Ms. Jonaitis through completion of the process.”

State Agencies Closed Friday, September 3 and Monday, September 6, 2010

September 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, Sept. 3, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget. State offices are also closed Monday, September 6, in observance of Labor Day.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, Sept. 3, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part SSS:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the third of 10 State government closure days in Fiscal Year 2011, which began July 1, 2010.

The seven remaining closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Friday, October 8, 2010

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Governor Urges Vigilance as Hurricane Earl Approaches Maine

September 2, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci joined Maine Emergency Management Agency Director Robert McAleer today on a conference call with a wide array of local, county, state and federal government emergency officials, as well as representatives from utilities, telecommunications and other private entities to review Maine's preparations for Hurricane Earl's arrival to the Gulf of Maine late Friday night into Saturday morning.

The Governor stressed that the track of the storm is still uncertain, and its effects may range from high waves and moderately high winds and rain to potentially heavier impact statewide if it moves further west.

"The State is coordinating information and resource needs to protect people in Maine," said the Governor. "We've been through storms before and we have been preparing for many days with our public and private partners. We have emergency personnel in Augusta and on the ground across the State ready for this storm no matter what track it takes. It's vital that people in Maine continue to watch weather reports and prepare themselves and their families as the storm continues to move north."

According to the National Weather Service, Hurricane Earl continues to bear down on the eastern seaboard, and its strength is likely to weaken as it continues to move north tonight. Current projections have the storm entering the Gulf of Maine around midnight on Friday and end around mid-morning on Saturday. At this point, Hancock and Washington Counties would receive the highest winds, which could range between 39 and 73 miles per hour.

The Governor cautioned that the amount and severity of the rains and winds that would hit Maine are still unknown. Power companies have been working with the State to ensure readiness should power outages occur.

The track of the storm should become clearer by tomorrow morning and into the afternoon. The Governor will join Maine Emergency Management Agency officials at MEMA headquarters tomorrow to reassess the positioning of various response personnel and other assets at that time.

According to the National Weather Service, regardless of the eventual track of Hurricane Earl, high waves and strong rip currents will be experienced along the entire coastline of the State.

"I urge all people in Maine to use extreme caution and to pay attention to the warnings by local, state and other officials regarding wave and current action along the coast," said the Governor.

The Governor advises people in Maine to continue to monitor the weather forecasts.

Federal, State, county and local officials have been monitoring the progress of Hurricane Earl and putting contingency plans in place since late last week. Because the Labor Day weekend is expected to

bring a surge of holiday visitors to coastal Maine, beach and boat safety have been of special concern to local and State officials.

For updated information about preparing for Hurricane Earl and other safety messages, visit <http://www.maineprepares.com/>

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Governor Names Acting Commissioner of Department of Environmental Protection

September 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced the appointment of Beth Nagusky as Acting Commissioner of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

“Beth has extensive experience working on issues vital to preserving Maine’s unique quality of place while helping Maine people and businesses use energy more efficiently. She has led efforts to provide incentives to businesses, to promote conservation and has worked to expand renewable energy,” said Governor Baldacci. “I am confident that Beth will continue to bring strong leadership and engage stakeholders to ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for Maine people.”

Nagusky has been serving as Director of the Office of Innovation and Assistance at the Department of Environmental Protection since May 2008. In this position, she has been working with businesses to promote sustainable practices. She was co-chair of the Ocean Energy Task Force, which made recommendations that were passed by the Maine Legislature to improve and update Maine laws to more fully realize the potential of harnessing Maine’s renewable resources.

Nagusky served as the first Director of the Governor’s Office of Energy Independence and Security under Governor Baldacci. Nagusky was instrumental in making Maine State government a model of energy efficiency and practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Under her leadership, Operation Keep ME Warm to weatherize Maine homes began as well as a series of public information campaigns on ways to conserve energy.

Nagusky has served as Director of the Independent Energy Producers of Maine (1997 – 2003), as a Staff Attorney at the Natural Resources Council of Maine (1987 – 1995) and as Staff Attorney at the Maine Public Utilities Commission (1983 – 1987). She earned a bachelors degree from the University of Michigan and law degree from Case Western Reserve Law School.

The Governor is expected to swear in Nagusky in the Governor’s Office on Wednesday morning.

Nagusky replaces David Littell, who will be sworn in as a Commissioner for the Maine Public Utilities Commission on Wednesday.

For more information on the Department of Environmental Protection and its responsibilities for protecting and restoring Maine's natural resources and enforcing the state's environmental laws, visit <http://www.maine.gov/dep>

Governor Congratulates Ocean Renewable Power Company

September 9, 2010

Company Receives Funding from Federal Department of Energy in Recent Renewable Power Grants

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today learned that the U.S. Department of Energy has awarded Ocean Renewable Power Company \$10 million to fund a key part of their commercial-scale tidal energy development project in Cobscook Bay. Ocean Renewable Power Company, based in Portland, Maine, received one of the two largest grants of the total \$37 million awarded by the federal Department of Energy today.

The Governor called Christopher Sauer, President and CEO of Ocean Renewable Power Company, to congratulate him and his team for their work thus far in Eastport and for securing this major funding to help continue the company's important work.

"I am pleased that Ocean Renewable Power Company has again been recognized for its leadership in development of tidal energy technology," said Governor Baldacci. "The company is demonstrating that clean energy derived from Maine's abundant natural resources has great potential to grow new jobs and yield economic gains for Maine residents."

Two weeks ago, the Governor joined Congressman Mike Michaud and U.S. Coast Guard officials for a tour and demonstration of Ocean Renewable Power Company's successful generation of energy through the use of tidal currents in Cobscook Bay. The company is partnering with the University of Maine and the U.S. Coast Guard and has received financial support from the State's Maine Technology Institute.

The company has previously been awarded grants from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). In July, the company was awarded \$750,000 from the department to refine cross flow turbines, which the DOE said will help identify the best designs and manufacturing process for turbines.

The Governor said the success of Ocean Renewable Power Company is important to the entire State as public and private partners in Maine continue to aggressively pursue development of clean, renewable energy.

"The ocean energy industry in Maine shows great promise," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine needs to continue its efforts to decrease our dependence on fossil fuels by harnessing our natural resources. This will create valuable jobs here at home, and preserve our environment and quality of life."

In partnership with the Maine Legislature, the Governor has worked to improve and update Maine laws to realize the potential for harnessing energy.

Maine also continues to explore opportunities with Nova Scotia for collaboration regarding research, technology and deployment of tidal energy and will be participating in a two-day workshop planned for Wednesday, October 13 and Thursday, October 14 in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Governor Baldacci and

Premier Dexter signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Ocean Energy Development on July 12, 2010 to share information on renewable electricity with a focus on ocean tidal energy.

Governor Baldacci Orders Flags Lowered to Half-Staff for Patriot Day

September 10, 2010

AUGUSTA - In accordance with Federal Public law 107-89, designating September 11th each year as "Patriot Day," Governor John Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Saturday, September 11, 2010.

"We will never forget the horrific attacks on our country on September 11, 2001," Governor Baldacci said. "We lost many Americans that day. We should all take time to remember those who died nine years ago, and also honor the men and women who selflessly gave of themselves to try and save their fellow Americans during the attacks. They will never be forgotten."

This year marks the ninth anniversary of the attacks on September 11, 2001.

Governor Attends Opening of Customer Service Center in Presque Isle

September 17, 2010

PRESQUE ISLE – Governor John E. Baldacci today participated in the grand opening and ribbon cutting of BalanceBPO's center of operations in Presque Isle.

The new teleservice company, based in Texas, along with the company TXVia, will jointly occupy the former MBNA building. Each company anticipates hiring 100 employees over the next 12 months.

"We are pleased that BalanceBPO and TXVia have chosen the location for their Center of Excellence here in Presque Isle," said Governor Baldacci. "BalanceBPO decided in part to locate here because of the high quality workforce in Maine. They have also singled out the leadership by local and State government to welcome them to this area."

BalanceBPO has begun the process to become Pine Tree Zone certified.

"Maine has an aggressive commitment to support new technologies and innovation," said the Governor. "Through incentives such as the Pine Tree Zone program, we are stimulating growth in targeted business sectors to support Maine businesses, create quality jobs for Maine people, strengthen our economy and keep Maine competitive in the global economy."

The Governor said that it was important to continue to use incentives like the Pine Tree Zone program, attract investments in the State and regionalize economic development in Maine.

Maine Recognized for Leadership in Covering Maine Citizens

September 20, 2010

PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci today welcomed White House Office of Health Reform Director Nancy-Ann DeParle to Maine. DeParle spoke to a group of hardworking Maine people and business owners about the national Affordable Care Act and Maine's leadership in implementing key early goals of the federal law.

"All Americans should have access to high quality, affordable health care. We cannot have a healthy economy without healthy people," said Governor Baldacci. "The federal health reform law provides new opportunities for Maine to cover more uninsured and address the cost and quality of health care."

The Affordable Care Act, which was signed by President Obama six months ago, is already helping Maine families to access health insurance. At the event today a number of Maine residents spoke about their ability to obtain affordable health coverage, and businesspeople spoke about their ability to make health insurance available for their employees. In addition to the federal law making health coverage more available and accessible, the DirigoChoice health insurance product has re-opened enrollment for individuals, the self-employed and small businesses.

"While the national landmark law doesn't take full effect until 2014, it is already working for Maine people," said the Governor. "The folks you see here today are hardworking Mainers who have before this law been unable to gain access to affordable coverage."

Among those who spoke about what affordable coverage means to their families was Monique Kenyon of Sanford. Monique's husband Edward was the first member enrolled in the new coverage for people with pre-existing conditions. Edward, who is self-employed, has been diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma (a form of blood cancer) and must have a bone marrow transplant. He's been struggling to work even limited hours after undergoing chemotherapy.

The Governor said Maine has been working to lay the foundation for quality affordable health coverage in Maine.

- o In 2003, Maine ranked 16th healthiest among the states; today we are in the top ten.
- o In 2003, Maine ranked 19th among the states in covering the uninsured. Today we rank sixth.
- o Maine has a new public health system and invested in prevention.
- o With the Maine Legislature, we passed, sustained and fixed a subsidized health insurance product, DirigoChoice, that is again open for new enrollment.

The Governor thanked DeParle and the partnerships that led to passage of the national health reform law. "Maine now has, with federal help, more tools by which we can make our people healthier," said the Governor.

The new federal law includes significant new responsibilities for states. In April, Governor Baldacci issued an Executive Order creating a Steering Committee on Health Reform to begin examining the law. Comprised of key State officials, the Steering Committee meets publicly and using independent consultants conducts analysis of the new law and its implications for Maine. In addition, the Maine Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Health Reform continues to discuss implementation of the federal law.

For more information about Dirigo health coverage, visit www.dirigohealth.maine.gov

For more information on Maine's work to advance the federal health care reform law, visit www.maine.gov/healthreform

Maine Receives Three National Awards for Online Government Services

September 23, 2010

State Web Site www.Maine.gov Ranked in Top 4 for the Past 11 Years

AUGUSTA, Maine – The Maine State Web Portal, www.Maine.gov has once again clinched a high placement as one of the best state government Web portals of 2010. Maine also received two prestigious awards for online state government services chosen for their innovation and effectiveness.

Maine.gov received a fourth-place ranking from the Center for Digital Government in its annual Best of the Web competition. Government Web sites are evaluated based on their innovation, Web-based delivery of public services, efficiency, economy and functionality. This award marks ten top-four placements for Maine.gov in the competition since 2000, a record held by no other state in the country.

"I am proud that the State's Web site has continued to evolve and grow to meet the needs of Maine taxpayers to navigate the vast array of information and resources provided by State government, and to make accessing services easier," said Governor Baldacci. "Maine continues to raise the bar on government transparency and accountability."

Maine.gov is the portal to more than 300,000 pages of state government content and 450 online services. In 2009, Maine.gov received 218 million page views. Maine.gov helps users find information, complete tasks, and stay informed with tools such as multimedia, mobile services, email alerts, Facebook, Twitter, and RSS.

"We are honored that Maine has been recognized again this year in the Best of the Web competition," said Maine Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap, who serves as the Chair of Maine's InforME Board overseeing Maine.gov. "It continues to be a high priority for us to maintain Maine.gov as an excellent online resource for the public." In addition to the Best of the Web competition, Maine received two Digital Government Achievement Awards: Government-to-government category: Maine was recognized for the Maine Recovery Act (ARRA) Electronic Reporting Solution. This solution was developed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and InforME in response to the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) stimulus funding law and its requirements for state reporting. It provides a way for state agencies to report their ARRA project details and expenditures to a centralized database; generates the necessary files for electronic federal reporting; and provides transparency through a dynamic public website (www.Maine.gov/recovery/).

"The success of this project required collaboration by many agencies. Through this solution, the state has been able to submit the required reports to the federal government on time and in full compliance," said Administrative and Finance Commissioner Ellen Schneider. "In addition, all of the data is available to the public in a transparent and user-friendly way."

Government-to-business category: Maine also received an award for the Maine TankSmart online service developed by the Department of Environmental Protection in partnership with InforME. TankSmart (www.Maine.gov/online/tanksmart/) is a free online service that provides training and certification for operators of underground oil storage facilities.

"Properly trained operators of underground petroleum storage tanks are the first line of defense for detecting and responding to evidence of a release. The TankSmart program provides easy access via the Internet to training that is free to Maine businesses. The training assists operators in preventing releases that can have harmful effects on Maine's valued water resources and the health of the neighboring community," said Acting DEP Commissioner Beth Nagusky.

Governor Mourns Loss of Soldier with Maine Ties

September 27, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Private First Class Clinton E. Springer II, 21, died in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sept. 24. He was a member of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y. The circumstances of the death are still under review.

“Pfc. Springer died while serving his country. His loss is a terrible tragedy,” Governor Baldacci said. “The military men and women serving in Afghanistan are called upon to complete dangerous missions far from home and family. Each and every one of them is a hero worthy of our respect and gratitude. Our hearts and prayers go out to Pfc. Springer’s family and friends during this difficult time.”

Pfc. Springer’s father lives in Sanford. His mother and brother live in Massachusetts.

The Governor will order flags flown at half-staff on the day of Pfc. Springer’s funeral.

Governor Baldacci Congratulates IDEXX and Pike on Compromise

August 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement concerning the compromise reached between IDEXX Laboratories and Pike Industries in Westbrook.

“This is an example of two strong Maine companies working through difficult issues to arrive at a compromise that is good for them, the community and the State,” Governor Baldacci said. “The situation in Westbrook has been challenging, but with the support and leadership of Mayor Hilton, the City Council and City Manager Bryant, these two important companies have been able to find a solution that will allow both continued success.”

Governor and First Lady Participate in Educare Central Maine

September 27, 2010

WATERVILLE – Governor John E. Baldacci and First Lady Karen Baldacci were among the sponsors and supporters of Educare Central Maine at the official ribbon cutting ceremony held this afternoon. Also participating today were members of the Alfond Family, philanthropist George Kaiser and Doris Buffett of the Sunshine Lady Foundation.

“Educare combines a high-quality educational environment with family support designed to improve health, self-sufficiency and well-being,” said the Governor. “I’m proud of the promise Maine’s Educare Center holds to help children get ready for school, create life-long learners and provide new opportunities for families to be successful.”

Educare Central Maine is the northeast’s first Educare child care center and preschool. The Center is a unique partnership between state and local government and the private sector that takes a comprehensive approach to helping children and families get ready for school. The Center’s highest priority is to help at-risk students be prepared for success.

Educare Central Maine officially opened its doors for 200 students ages 0-5 earlier in September. While Educare has the potential to save the Waterville School District millions of dollars in special education costs, the Center is funded completely through existing resources and private donations.

“While the Center is located in Central Maine, its impact will be felt statewide,” said Governor Baldacci. “It will be a demonstration site for the rest of Maine, putting the best early childhood research to work while also helping the professional development of teachers and childcare workers around the State.”

Educare Central Maine is a partnership between the Bounce Learning Network, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, Ounce of Prevention Fund and locally, the Bill and Joan Alfond Foundation, the Kaiser Family Foundation, Kellogg Foundation and Waterville Public Schools.

Staff from Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, which has administered Head Start services in northern Kennebec and Somerset counties for more than three decades, operates the center.

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Governor Celebrates Generous Gift to Maine Soldiers

September 28, 2010

AUGUSTA – On behalf of the Maine National Guard Foundation, Governor John E. Baldacci and Major General John W. Libby of the Maine National Guard today accepted \$300,000 from the estate of Anna Doby. The funds will be used to support Maine soldiers' families.

Doby, who passed away last year, was pre-deceased by her husband, Dr. Tibor Doby. The Cape Elizabeth couple had emigrated from Hungary after participating in the failed 1956 revolt against Soviet control. The couple moved to Maine in 1960 and dedicated themselves to serving their community.

"Having lived through oppression, the Doby's had a deep appreciation for the values and the freedoms we enjoy in this country, and for the close-knit community that defines Maine," said Governor Baldacci. "They recognized the great cost of protecting our freedoms. They knew the great sacrifices of our soldiers. Their generous support of Maine troops will be a lasting legacy of Anna and Tibor Doby."

Mr. Lou Dorogi, a resident of Topsham and longtime family friend of the Dobys, detailed the couple's struggle to escape from Hungary. They began their new life in the United States as refugees, eventually establishing themselves in Maine. Dr. Doby served as Chief of Radiology at Mercy Hospital in Portland.

The Governor said the funds from the Doby estate will enable the Maine National Guard Foundation to provide support to soldiers and their families during difficult times. "During this time of war, I have talked to too many families who have lost a son or daughter, brother or sister, parent or friend in Iraq and Afghanistan," said the Governor. "Those left behind while their family members serve also sacrifice greatly. They need our support. This donation will go a long way to provide critical assistance to them."

Governor Joins Iberdrola and Central Maine Power for Launch of Major Projects and Partnership Announcement with University of Maine

September 28, 2010

PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Iberdrola Group Chairman Ignacio Galán and Central Maine Power (CMP) officials to launch a number of projects vital to Maine's energy future.

"CMP is a valuable corporate partner in Maine," said Governor Baldacci. "The commitment of CMP's parent company, Iberdrola, to invest in critical infrastructure and research in new energy technology is essential to Maine's economy and preserving our quality of life. Maine ratepayers will benefit and thousands of jobs are being created as a result of the investments we are talking about today."

Iberdrola broke ground today on the Maine Power Reliability Program (MPRP), a \$1.4 billion transmission project to upgrade the capacity of its electrical grid. The project includes construction of substations and about 450 miles of new or rebuilt transmission lines. According to Iberdrola, the project will support approximately 2,000 jobs a year during the construction phase.

"Maine is rapidly becoming a recognized leader in renewable energy development, including wind power," said Governor Baldacci. "We've moved aggressively in the State to reduce our dependence on fossil fuel, to develop domestic energy resources, and to encourage conservation and energy efficiency through investments in new technology. We need a reliable and effective infrastructure to harness and move this power."

Iberdrola also began installation of more than 600,000 new smart grid electrical meters today. The project received \$96 million in federal Recovery Act funds to support the upgrade in equipment, which will wirelessly transmit information to CMP and CMP customers regarding energy usage. The technology holds the promise of better management of energy use.

At a South Gorham substation, the Governor met with Chairman Galán and University of Maine President Robert Kennedy for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Iberdrola and the University. The MOU establishes education initiatives focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency. Iberdrola will provide financial support to assist the university in maintaining graduate level student research in energy technology.

"Iberdrola's investments will provide the infrastructure and technology to help Maine meet its energy goals," said Governor Baldacci. "Iberdrola and CMP are good corporate citizens and working in partnership we can help to implement innovations that will benefit Maine residents and businesses for years to come."

Governor Orders Curtailment of State Spending

October 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today took steps to reduce State spending by more than \$10 million in the current fiscal year.

The Governor signed a curtailment Executive Order to reduce spending by \$8.8 million, consistent with special curtailment authority included in the supplemental budget passed this spring.

In addition, the Governor has identified \$1.2 million in additional spending freezes that can be implemented through the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. He has also directed the department to pursue other spending freezes that can be implemented within its authority.

“While Maine’s economy is beginning to recovery from the worst recession since the Great Depression, we know that there are many tough choices ahead. The most responsible approach is to constrain spending now,” Governor Baldacci said. “I am exercising my authority to reduce spending immediately, as contained in the bipartisan budget passed last spring, and I am aggressively implementing other administrative strategies to cut spending.”

In August, the U.S. Congress and the President enacted important legislation that will help protect jobs, education and health care in Maine and around the country. The law extended federal support for Medicaid and provided funding to protect education jobs. The legislation provided \$76.2 million in enhanced Medicaid funding and \$39 million in direct support to local school districts.

Maine’s budget, which was passed with two-thirds support of the Legislature earlier this year, had anticipated increased federal Medicaid support of \$85 million, but granted the Governor special authority to curtail in the event that Congress did not act or acted in a way that provided less than that amount.

Maine finished the last fiscal year on June 30, 2010, with revenues that exceeded projections by \$70.4 million. The law required those funds to be deposited into the Budget Stabilization Fund, the Loan Insurance Reserve Fund at the Finance Authority of Maine, General Fund Operating Capital, the State retirement system and retiree health, the Capital Construction and Improvement Reserve Fund and the governor’s contingent account.

In addition, revenues for the first two months of the current fiscal year are above projections by \$22.5 million. However, Maine Revenue Service estimates the better-than-expected performance can be partially attributed to the timing of payments.

“Given the context of the budget language, current revenue performance and the continued uncertainty of the economic recovery, the actions I am taking today are responsible and prudent.” Governor Baldacci said. “They will constrain spending and give the next Governor and next Legislature more options as they work to develop a supplemental budget and the next two-year budget.”

The curtailment order is temporary and serves to reduce the rate of spending until a supplemental budget can be passed. The budget language set a deadline for a curtailment of Oct. 1, 2010.

The process to identify the curtailments began when State departments and agencies were assigned reduction targets. Each department or agency presented options and program impact analyses to meet the targets. The proposed reductions were evaluated based on a number of factors, including the effects on public health and safety, the extent that the impact could be minimized and whether the proposal, insofar as practicable, followed the intent of the Legislature.

General Purpose Aid to Education and funding for higher education are not included in the reductions.

"The school year has begun and local districts need time to prepare for the loss of Recovery Act dollars, which will impact their budgets next year," Governor Baldacci said.

The curtailment order has been reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General.

The Legislature and the Judiciary are not included in the curtailment order. But the leaders of both branches have agreed to make reductions in spending consistent with the scope of the Governor's orders.

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Governor Baldacci's Statement on Sale of Domtar Mill in Baileyville

October 1, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement regarding the sale by Domtar Corporation of its Woodland hardwood pulp mill, hydroelectric facility and related assets in Baileyville. The mill, which began operations in 1905 and has been the hub of economic activity in that region of Maine since, is being sold to International Grand Investment Corporation.

"I have appreciated Domtar's commitment to the Woodland mill," Governor Baldacci said. "Domtar's senior management team has maintained a close dialogue with my administration and kept me apprised of developments at the facility. I want to convey my thanks and appreciation for their hard work in Washington County."

"I also want to welcome International Grand Investment Corporation, the mill's new owners, to Maine. I look forward to meeting with their leadership team to review their plans for the continued successful operation of the Woodland mill, and I'm optimistic that we can develop the same open lines of communication and cooperation that existed between my administration and Domtar."

Governor Praises Maine Chamber of Commerce Workforce Initiative

October 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined representatives from Maine businesses and higher education institutions for the unveiling of a new workforce development tool sponsored by the Maine Chamber of Commerce. The program, InternHelpME.com, uses a Web-based system to match students in Maine higher education institutions with Maine employers for internship experiences.

“InternHelpME.com will help students gain valuable experience while they are in school, will help businesses recruit talented workers and will build on the current career development programs that Maine colleges and universities offer,” said Governor Baldacci. “I applaud our business community for making this commitment to increasing skills among our students and providing a critical link with Maine higher education.”

Enhancing connections between Maine businesses and the future workforce was a theme raised by businesspeople who participated in the Governor’s Job Summit hosted by the Governor, the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and the Maine Chamber of Commerce in February.

“Our workforce needs to be closely aligned with the needs of our business community and our changing economy,” said the Governor. “InternHelpMe.com will help ensure that we have a workforce educated for today’s skilled jobs. The effort will give students a valuable opportunity to put their growing knowledge to practice. This is an exciting initiative that will benefit all of Maine and one I’m happy to endorse.”

Governor Baldacci said that the Chamber of Commerce’s work also has the goal to encourage more students in Maine to remain here after they graduate.

“Maine has a well-deserved reputation for having among the best workers and we need to make sure we encourage partnerships that will continue to build our talent right here in Maine,” said the Governor. “A highly skilled workforce will in turn encourage more businesses to locate or expand in the State. This program can make a difference for Maine and help keep our talent right here, growing businesses and our economy.”

For more information about the initiative, please visit: www.InternHelpME.com

Governor Baldacci's Statement on the Death of Kay Mills

October 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci released the following statement tonight after learning of the death of Kay Mills.

“Kay Mills was the matriarch of an incredible family,” Governor Baldacci said. “I have known Mrs. Mills for many years, and she has always been a strong advocate for Maine and the things that make our State special. She raised her children to get involved, to take a stand and to make a difference in the world. The commitment to public service she helped to instill continues to make our State a better place through the work of her children. I would like to express my sincerest sympathies to the Mills family on behalf of all the people of Maine.”

Mrs. Mills was the mother of Attorney General Janet Mills; Maine Director of Public Health Dora Mills; State Senator and former two-time gubernatorial candidate Peter Mills; Farmington attorney and Maine historian Paul Mills and Farmington resident David Mills.

Governors Baldacci and Lynch Create Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force

October 5, 2010

PORTMOUTH-KITTERY – Maine Governor John E. Baldacci and New Hampshire Governor John Lynch today signed concurrent Executive Orders creating a Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force.

“The three bridges across the Piscataqua River are essential to Maine and New Hampshire,” Governor Baldacci said. “It’s in the interest of both of our states to work together to find the best way to finance the work that needs to be done to improve and maintain these critical transportation links. Both Governor Lynch and I are committed to identifying a cooperative and cost-effective solution to address all three bridges.”

In the Executive Orders, both governors recognize the need to replace the Memorial Bridge, to replace or significantly rehabilitate the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and to maintain the Piscataqua River Bridge that carries Interstate 95. The estimated capital costs over the next several years could be as high as \$300 million for the three jointly owned bridges.

Governor Baldacci also said that he has been briefed on the draft of the Maine-New Hampshire Connections Study, which will identify options for replacing or maintaining the Memorial Bridge and the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge. The study assumes the Piscataqua River Bridge will be maintained in good condition.

“It’s clear to me that we must replace the Memorial Bridge,” Governor Baldacci said. “I know that the study needs to be completed and public comments considered, but I recognize how important the Memorial Bridge is to Kittery and Portsmouth. The replacement of the bridge has to be part of any plan that I would support.”

The duties of the Task Force are to identify mechanisms that would allow the states to jointly maximize funding for necessary work, identify joint financing options, and to propose necessary legislation that may be necessary in each state.

The Task Force must report to the governors no later than Dec. 15, 2010.

The Maine Members of the Task Force are the Maine Commissioner of Transportation, the Chair of the Maine Turnpike Authority and a representative of a statewide business organization, to be appointed by the Governor.

In August, Governor Baldacci sent a letter supporting a federal grant application by New Hampshire that seeks funding to replace the Memorial Bridge. The application was submitted under the TIGER II Discretionary Grant program, which will award funding on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area or a region. The U.S. Department of Transportation is authorized to award \$600 million nationally for the program. Nearly 1,000 applications were submitted seeking more than \$19 billion.

The text of the Executive Order that Governor Baldacci signed this afternoon follows.

04 FY 11/12

October 5, 2010

AN ORDER ESTABLISHING THE BI-STATE

BRIDGE FUNDING TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, New Hampshire and Maine jointly own three bridges across the Piscataqua River connecting Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine: the Piscataqua River Bridge hereinafter referred to as the High Level Bridge, which carries Interstate 95, the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge, which carries the US 1 Bypass, and the Memorial Bridge, which carries US Route 1; and

WHEREAS, these bridges are essential to the movement of people and goods between and through the 2 states, serving as the primary travel route between population centers to our south and through to Canada to the north as well as key routes for people and goods between and within our states; and

WHEREAS, the Memorial Bridge, built in 1923, links the thriving business, social, religious and arts communities of Kittery and Portsmouth, is the only bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Piscataqua River, supports community cohesion and quality of life, and has experienced structural deterioration that would necessitate closure within one to three years; and

WHEREAS, the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge, built in 1940, provides a critical link across the river, including a rail line used to transport heavy freight to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which employs approximately 4,200 workers, heavy truck transit to and from the commercial service stations along the US 1 Bypass, serves as a critical back-up route in the event of a disruption of service on Interstate 95, and has experienced structural deterioration reducing its life expectancy to 5 to 7 years for vehicle traffic; and

WHEREAS, following many years of evaluation and discussion, New Hampshire and Maine agree that replacement of the Memorial Bridge, replacement or extensive rehabilitation of the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge, and on-going maintenance and repair of the High Level Bridge are necessary to maintain and improve existing connections, service levels and mobility; and

WHEREAS, the financial resources needed to address these bridges are extensive, currently estimated at \$200 million to \$300 million in capital costs over the next several years, which will require legislative approval; and

WHEREAS, New Hampshire and Maine seek a cooperative, comprehensive, sustainable, cost-effective, and long-term solution that addresses all three bridges;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACCI, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish the Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force ("Task Force") to work with the State of New Hampshire Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force established this same day by Executive Order of the Honorable John Lynch, Governor

of New Hampshire, to coordinate the states' long-term financing plan for the capital and operating needs of the bi-state transportation corridor, as follows:

Task Force Name

The Task Force shall be known as the Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force.

Membership

The Maine members of Task Force shall be the Maine Commissioner of Transportation, the Chair of the Maine Turnpike Authority and a representative of a statewide business organization, to be appointed by the Governor.

Duties

The duties of the Task Force are as follows:

- Identify mechanisms that would allow the two states to jointly identify and maximize funding for the replacement, rehabilitation, repair, maintenance, and operation of the three bridges;
- Identify methods to jointly structure financing for the replacement of Memorial Bridge, the replacement or rehabilitation of Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and the repair of the High Level Bridge;
- Propose such legislation that may be necessary in each state to facilitate the funding structure and other contractual authority for state agencies or authorities consistent with each state's laws; and
- Deliver a report to the Governors of the States of Maine and New Hampshire no later than December 15, 2010 with the proposals and recommended legislation required by this Order.

Staffing and Assistance

All Maine state agencies and departments shall make reasonable efforts to cooperate with the Task Force and shall furnish such information and assistance as the Task Force reasonably deems necessary to accomplish its purposes.

The Maine Department of Transportation shall be the lead Maine agency in furnishing assistance to the Task Force.

Effective Date

The effective date of this order is October 5, 2010

John E. Baldacci, Governor

State Agencies Closed Friday, Oct. 8, and Monday, Oct. 11, 2010

October 6, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Friday, Oct. 8, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget. State offices are also closed Monday, Oct. 11, in observance of Columbus Day.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Friday, Oct. 8, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part SSS:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the fourth of 10 State government closure days in Fiscal Year 2011, which began July 1, 2010.

The six remaining closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Governor Signs Executive Order to Support School-Based Flu Vaccination Clinics

October 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today signed an Executive Order that will help to facilitate school-based vaccination clinics.

“The best way to prevent serious illness and the spread of seasonal flu is to promote vaccination,” Governor Baldacci said. “Last year, Maine was very successful in vaccinating children in the State during the H1N1 emergency. While the threat of a pandemic appears to have passed, the flu continues to pose a risk, especially to children and pregnant women. We are continuing our efforts to support school-based vaccination programs because they are effective, safe and promote public health.”

Many school districts reported that a concern about potential liability was putting at risk their ability to provide vaccination clinics. The Executive Order protects school districts and other vaccination clinic participants from liability.

The Executive Order also will provide immunity from tort liability for approved health care workers who administer the flu vaccines.

The Executive Order directs the Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Education, and the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services to designate appropriate health care personnel to distribute and administer the vaccines.

“While the vaccinations are voluntary and it is up to parents to decide whether their children should be vaccinated, it’s important that as many children as possible have access to this important preventative treatment,” Governor Baldacci said. “Controlling the spread of the flu in schools is one of the most effective ways to slow the disease.”

The text of the Executive Order follows:

05 FY 11/12

October 12, 2010

AN ORDER DESIGNATING THE MAINE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO DESIGNATE HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL- BASED H1N1 VACCINATION CLINICS

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2010, the World Health Organization terminated the Phase 6 pandemic alert for 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza, determined the world was entering a post-pandemic period in which post-pandemic period cases and outbreaks of the H1N1 (2009) virus are expected to occur for some period of time, and that younger age groups, including pregnant women, will continue to be affected disproportionately by severe disease from the H1N1(2009) virus; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization is recommending continued prevention and control efforts to reduce the impact of the H1N1 virus, including vaccination against the influenza, including the H1N1 vaccine and the seasonal influenza vaccines, depending upon availability and national guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that all persons be vaccinated each year for the H1N1 Influenza virus and that annual vaccination of all children aged 6 months to 18 years should begin as soon as the influenza vaccine is available; and

WHEREAS, the 2010-2011 seasonal influenza vaccine approved by the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will protect against the 2009 H1N1 virus as well as other influenza strains which are circulating, H3N2 virus and Influenza B virus; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Maine Department of Education are organizing a school-based campaign to provide seasonal influenza vaccine in accordance with the recommendations of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

WHEREAS, On February 26, 2010, Health and Human Services Secretary Sebelius amended her September 28, 2009 Emergency Declaration regarding Pandemic Influenza Vaccines pursuant to the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (42 U.S.C. §247-d-6d), in which she determined that the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A virus remains circulating and remains capable of causing a pandemic of human influenza and extended the public health emergency declaration until February 28, 2012, and further determined that covered countermeasures included the development, distribution, administration and usage of vaccines against Influenza A viruses with pandemic potential and any associated adjuvants; and

WHEREAS, the availability of statewide school-based vaccination clinics is threatened due to concerns about potential legal liability relating to administration of the vaccine;

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State of Maine, do hereby direct the Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Education, and the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services in the designation of appropriate health care personnel to distribute and administer H1N1 influenza vaccines in participating school-based vaccination clinics.

Mission and Scope

Pursuant to the implementation of this Executive Order, I order the following:

A. The Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Education shall coordinate with the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Maine Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services to identify those health care workers duly licensed and

authorized to administer influenza vaccines in the State of Maine who are able and available to participate in the planned school-based vaccinations for seasonal influenza.

B. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Education and Maine Emergency Management Agency shall coordinate and facilitate the establishment, implementation, administration and operation of vaccination clinics in school-based settings in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

C. The relevant provisions of the Maine Pandemic Influenza Plan will be activated to facilitate the distribution and administration of the seasonal influenza vaccine.

D. To the extent necessary to assure the timely provision of seasonal influenza in school-based clinics in accordance with the guidance of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency will exercise his authority pursuant to 37-B M.R.S.A. §784-A to call for and employ persons considered necessary for assistance, and designate appropriate health care workers licensed in this State and authorized to administer vaccines to participate in vaccination clinics in accordance with the requirements of this Executive Order.

E. All persons designated by the Maine Emergency Management Agency to participate in vaccine administration shall, pursuant to 37-B M.R.S.A. §784-A, be deemed employees of the State and entitled to immunity pursuant to 37-B M.R.S.A. §822.

F. The Maine Center for Disease Control and the Maine Emergency Management Agency shall coordinate with the federal government to secure all appropriate influenza vaccines, if necessary.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is October 12, 2010. The Executive Order shall expire on February 28, 2011, unless earlier rescinded.

Maine Student in Online Competition for SportsKid of the Year 2010

October 13, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today encouraged people to support Maine student Myles Silverman of Brunswick, who is a semi-finalist in the SportsKid of the Year 2010 competition by Sports Illustrated Kids. People can vote online between now and Monday, October 18, at <http://www.sikids.com/contests/skoty/2010/vote>

Myles, 13, excels in school and has achieved success pursuing the sports of snowboarding, baseball, soccer and tennis. He also volunteers in his community.

“Myles exhibits the strong Maine work ethic and dedication to meeting his goals while contributing to his community,” said Governor Baldacci. “I hope that Maine people will visit the Web site and will vote for Myles.”

The top three youth who receive votes online will be finalists, with the final judging to be completed by Sports Illustrated Kids staff.

The competition is for students ages 7 to 15. Criteria are split between academic and athletic achievement and community service. Myles is the only semi-finalist representing Maine.

Governor and Maine Technology Institute Announce \$7.25 Million in Maine Technology Asset Fund Grants

October 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci and Maine Technology Institute (MTI) President Betsy Biemann today announced that the MTI Board of Directors has approved a total of \$7.25 million in awards to 10 applicants across Maine. This is the third round of funding from the Maine Technology Asset Fund, which is a competitive award program funded by Maine State bond proceeds. The fund supports research, development and commercialization projects that will lead to significant economic benefits for Maine.

“The projects that are receiving support today will develop and bring new technologies to market and boost the State’s economy,” said Governor Baldacci. “These are smart investments in our technology sectors that build on our strengths. Over the years, MTI investments have generated new jobs for Maine people and leveraged federal funding for our traditional and emerging industries.”

The awards announced today cover projects representing Maine’s seven technology sectors:

- Advanced Technologies for Forestry and Agriculture
- Aquaculture and Marine Technology
- Biotechnology
- Composite Materials Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Information Technology
- Precision Manufacturing Technology

The Fund is funded through bonds. Maine people voted in support of bond questions on the November 2007 and June 2010 ballots totaling \$53 million to support investments in innovations.

The first two rounds of competitive awards from the Maine Technology Asset Fund totaled \$45.6 million to 25 projects. More than \$69 million in matching funds were leveraged from those investments.

“The Maine Technology Asset Fund awards serve as a catalyst for Maine's economy by funding cutting-edge technology development in some of Maine’s most entrepreneurial companies and research organizations,” said MTI President Betsy Biemann. “We were extremely impressed with the breadth and competitiveness of the applicant pool overall, and of this group of award winners.”

“The projects receiving funding demonstrate the potential of collaboration among Maine technology developers to foster economic development across the state,” said Commissioner Thaxter Trafton of the

Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. "The Maine Technology Asset Fund programs increases Maine's world-class research, development and commercialization across the state, which returns more than \$14 to the Maine economy for every dollar awarded."

MTI was created by the Legislature in 1999 to stimulate and support research and development activity leading to the commercialization of new products and services in the State's technology-intensive industrial sectors. Programs are designed to enhance the competitive position of those sectors and increase the likelihood that one or more of the sectors will support clusters of industrial activity and create new jobs.

The list of award recipients follows. For more information on the award recipients and their projects, please visit Maine Technology Institute's website, www.mainetechnology.org.

Organization, Project, Location, Award Amount

University of Maine, Advanced Biomechanics Laboratory for Injury Reduction and Rehabilitation, Orono, \$533,300

Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Community-Based Research to Support the Maine Lobster Industry, Portland, \$532,550

Biovation LLC, Laboratory Facilities for Wound Care Products, Boothbay, \$125,000

University of Maine, Fishlab: Fisheries Innovation, Sustainability & Health Lab, Orono, \$600,000

University of Maine, Commercialization of New Technologies for Animal Disease Surveillance, Orono, \$497,392

University of Maine, Biomass Engineered Fuel, Orono & Fort Fairfield, \$1,659,655

Ocean Renewable Power Corporation Maine, LLC, TidGen Power System Commercialization Project, Portland & Eastport, \$1,200,000

University of Maine & University of Maine System, Cider: Cyberinfrastructure Investment for Development, Economic Growth and Research, Orono, \$250,000

The Jackson Laboratory, Complex Workflow Management: An Engineered Solution, Bar Harbor, \$900,000

Packgen, The E-Pack Drum: Manufacturing an Environmentally-Friendly Alternative to the 55 Gallon Steel Drum, Auburn, \$950,000

Governor Baldacci Commends Harold Alfond Foundation on Major Gift Announcement to University of Maine

October 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today praised the Harold Alfond Foundation for its announcement of a \$5.5 million gift to the University of Maine.

The award will support two critical capital improvement projects to enhance University of Maine athletic facilities.

“This generous gift is in step with the legacy that Harold Alfond has left this State, especially in regards to serving the future of Maine through support of our educational institutions,” said Governor Baldacci. “I thank the Board of Trustees of the Harold Alfond Foundation, and in particular Greg Powell, Chair of the Board of Trustees, for recognizing the great impact this contribution to the University will have on the entire State.”

The gift includes \$3.5 million in support of renovations of the Alfond Hockey Arena. In addition, a \$2 million challenge grant will help the University make renovations to the Memorial Gym and Field House.

Governor Baldacci, an alumnus of the University of Maine, said that Alfond would be pleased with the announcement today, because it will create a lasting benefit to the community. “Harold Alfond’s name is on many buildings around the State, but his impact is more than bricks and mortar. He built partnerships and encouraged people to join forces for the common good. This donation comes in partnership with the work of many at the University who support its mission to provide opportunities to Maine students and communities.”

Governor Baldacci Pleased with Federal Grants Supporting Maine Transportation Infrastructure

October 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today said he was pleased that the U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded \$30.5 million in federal grants to support two important transportation projects in Maine.

As part of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER II, grant program, the joint effort between Maine and New Hampshire to replace the Memorial Bridge was awarded \$20 million.

The federal government also awarded \$10.5 million to support Maine's efforts to save the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway, which was threatened with abandonment.

"The Memorial Bridge and the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway are critical to Maine's economy," Governor Baldacci said. "These grants will create and protect jobs, support important industries and maintain vital transportation links in Southern and Northern Maine."

"I am pleased that Maine has good partners in the Obama administration, in our Congressional Delegation and with the U.S. Department of Transportation who recognize that these improvements are essential to creating and maintaining jobs," said Governor Baldacci.

Governor Baldacci and Governor John Lynch of New Hampshire have been working collaboratively on plans to replace the Memorial Bridge between Kittery and Portsmouth, N.H., to repair or replace the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and maintain the Interstate 95 bridge across the Piscataqua River.

"The bridges across the Piscataqua River are the gateways to Maine," Governor Baldacci said. "Governor Lynch and I have been working closely together to ensure these important bridges are replaced, repaired and maintained."

"Businesses in Kittery and Portsmouth depend upon the Memorial Bridge. That close connection must be maintained," Governor Baldacci said. "I'm gratified that the U.S. Department of Transportation recognized the collaborative and creative approach Maine and New Hampshire have undertaken to ensure these connections continue."

Last week, Governor Baldacci met with Governor Lynch to declare their support to replace the Memorial Bridge, to replace or significantly rehabilitate the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and to maintain the Piscataqua River Bridge that carries Interstate 95. The estimated capital costs over the next several years could be as high as \$300 million for the three jointly owned bridges.

Efforts to save the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway began this spring when the current owners announced their intention to abandon the line, which serves more than 20 companies in Northern Maine.

"Rail is the most economical, most cost effective and environmentally sound way to move wood and finished forest products to market," said Governor Baldacci. "Ensuring the viability of the rail is essential to the economy of Maine, and that is why the Congressional Delegation, Maine Legislature and my Administration have been working together to save this economic lifeline."

The State is currently negotiating the purchase of the approximately 240-mile rail line. The purchase will be funded, in part, with proceeds from a \$7 million bond approved by voters in June. The \$10.5 million grant will fund necessary repairs and maintenance on the railroad.

"These two grants will save jobs, protect important industries and help keep Maine open for business," Governor Baldacci said. "That's great news."

Significant Gift Brings New Health Opportunities to Maine

October 15, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today released the following statement concerning the collaboration between Peter and Paula Lunder, the Lunder Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital.

Named for Massachusetts General primary care physician and Maine native, James J. Dineen, the James J. Dineen Maine-MGH Health Education Partnership will use technology to bring educational opportunities to health care providers in Maine. Dr. Dineen will lead this initiative and will be joined by another Maine native, Jeanette Ives Erickson, Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and chief nurse at Massachusetts General, and by Dr. Robert Birnbaum, who heads MGH Academy. The initiative will provide all health care providers and patients in Maine with access to the resources at Massachusetts General and the Norman Knight Nursing Center.

“Using technology and a collaborative approach, this initiative will open new opportunities to Maine doctors, nurses, health care providers, patients and their families,” Governor Baldacci said. “Peter and Paula Lunder care deeply about Maine, and through their philanthropy they will make available cutting edge resources to improve health care in our State.”

The initiative builds upon the established MGH Academy, which offers web-based programs for health care providers like the Home Base Program, which works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to support servicemen and servicewomen who are suffering from deployment-related stress disorders or traumatic brain injury.

According to Massachusetts General, the program will offer on-site, online, meeting, teleconferencing and multi-media educational opportunities to health care professionals, patients and their families.

The Lunders have contributed \$5 million to the James J. Dineen Maine – MGH Health Education Partnership, which Massachusetts General will match with an additional \$5 million.

State Reaches Deal to Purchase Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway

October 19, 2010

AUGUSTA – The State of Maine has reached an agreement to purchase 233 miles of track in Aroostook and Penobscot counties from the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway.

“This agreement will ensure that Northern Maine continues to have access to rail service,” Governor John E. Baldacci said. “Improved rail connections are critical to Maine’s economy, and this line particularly will help to protect thousands of jobs and major employers in Aroostook and Penobscot counties. The economic impact of the successful rehabilitation of this line will be felt throughout Maine.”

The owners of the railroad had begun the process to abandon the line, which would have cut off rail service to Northern Maine and hurt important industries throughout Maine.

The agreement, which concludes more than a year of negotiations between the State and the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, calls for a purchase price of \$20.1 million in cash for the rail line from Millinocket to Madawaska and branch lines to Caribou, Presque Isle, Easton, Houlton and Limestone.

The State will receive title to the line, free of any liens, along with overhead traffic rights to move freight over certain lines that MMA is retaining. These trackage rights will allow a new operator to connect with the Canadian National line at Van Buren and the Eastern Maine Railway in Brownville Junction. MMA will provide any needed interchange infrastructure and track at these interchange locations for the new operator.

Funding for the purchase includes: \$7 million from a June 2010 bond, \$4 million from a November 2009 bond that is being repurposed, \$7 million from state reserve accounts, \$1.1 million from rail balances from canceled projects, and \$1 million from a major shipper on the line.

In addition, Maine was notified last Friday that the state will receive \$10,546,436 in federal TIGER II funds for track improvements that will allow trains to move faster and provide more reliable service to Maine shippers who do business in a very competitive environment.

As the sale is finalized, MaineDOT will issue a Request for Proposals to solicit a private rail operator to provide service over the lines being purchased. MaineDOT has already received numerous expressions of interest from established railroads and expects lively competition for this franchise.

The agreement to purchase this section of the MMA Railway preserves a vital economic corridor and transportation asset in Northern Maine. More than 25 businesses in the area rely on this rail link, and an estimated 750-1,000 jobs could have been threatened or at risk if the tracks were abandoned.

"This will certainly improve the business climate in Northern Maine," said MaineDOT Commissioner David Cole. "Lifting this cloud of uncertainty not only helps stabilize these rail dependent industries, but with improved services lays the groundwork for future expansion and new business opportunities."

The combination of the TIGER II capital grant to improve the rail infrastructure and the opportunity for more efficient rail operations means a great deal to the overall state economy as well. The preservation and improvement of this service ensures the steady supply of raw products to paper mills in the south and to manufacturing customers throughout the region and nationally.

Maine, New Hampshire Welcome Secretary LaHood to Memorial Bridge

October 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, Sen. Olympia Snowe, Sen. Susan Collins, Rep. Chellie Pingree, N.H. Gov. John Lynch, N.H. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen and N.H. Rep. Carol Shea Porter to formally accept a \$20 million federal grant to replace the Memorial Bridge, which connects Kittery, ME, and Portsmouth, N.H.

“The Memorial Bridge is a critical connection between Maine and New Hampshire,” Governor Baldacci said. “The success of this grant application speaks to the collaborative approach and the close partnership between Maine, New Hampshire, our Congressional Delegations and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The replacement of The Memorial Bridge and the necessary work on the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge will require extraordinary commitment from all of us. But we know that these connections are critical for jobs and our regional economy.”

The grant was awarded as part of the federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER II, grant program.

"I'm thrilled to announce that we are committing \$20 million to replace the deteriorating Memorial Bridge, keeping open a crucial river crossing for cars, trucks, cyclists and pedestrians," said U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood. "The Memorial Bridge replacement project is vital to the region's economy, not only because it will create jobs, but because it will also eliminate barriers to freight movement and improve access to the region's transportation network."

Governor Baldacci and Governor Lynch have been working collaboratively on plans to replace the Memorial Bridge between Kittery and Portsmouth, N.H., to repair or replace the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and maintain the Interstate 95 bridge across the Piscataqua River.

Earlier this month, Governor Baldacci met with Governor Lynch to declare their support to replace the Memorial Bridge, to replace or significantly rehabilitate the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge and to maintain the Piscataqua River Bridge that carries Interstate 95. The estimated capital costs over the next several years could be as high as \$300 million for the three jointly owned bridges.

Governor Recognizes Business Development Specialists Across Maine

October 21, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today congratulated eight regional business development specialists trained and certified by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). The program is part of the Governor's vision to regionalize economic development and make it more responsive.

"Working with the Maine Chamber of Commerce and their members, my Administration has been providing tools to Maine businesses to help them innovate, invest and grow jobs," said Governor Baldacci. "The certification of regional specialists is an important shift in the way the State approaches economic development, recognizing that it's best directed from the ground-up, not top-down."

Governor Baldacci charged the DECD with coordinating and empowering regions so that they can further economic development in ways that makes sense to them.

The Governor told the certified specialists that they are critical links to this new way of linking business to State incentives.

"You will provide the best resources and assistance on the ground to the business community in your region," said the Governor. "The State has effective incentives to attract and grow business, such as Maine's Pine Tree Zone program, and your ability to connect interested groups to these programs will help provide jobs in your communities."

The regionalization of economic development in the State is one of a number of issues raised by businesses at the Governor's Jobs Summit held in February.

The Jobs Summit has also led to other initiatives that have grown with the input of the business community, including creating a one-stop-shop of economic development tools and information at DECD. The Governor also announced this fall the Invest in Maine Initiative with the Maine International Trade Center, which will attract new investment into the State.

The Governor and the Maine Chamber of Commerce announced in October an initiative of the Chamber that partners with Maine institutions of higher education to help develop Maine's workforce. InternHelpME.com is an online matching serve to link students in Maine to internship opportunities with Maine businesses.

All these initiatives are designed to enable Maine businesses to have access to more tools to help them succeed.

Governor Views Rail Improvements

October 22, 2010

WATERVILLE – Governor John E. Baldacci today toured by train to see four rail projects in the State that are in varying stages of redevelopment or expansion.

“Rail is an important mode of transporting goods and people in Maine and will become only more important as Maine seeks to decrease our dependence on costly fossil fuels,” said Governor Baldacci. “The investments being made in rail infrastructure are critical to strengthening our entire economy.”

The excursion began in Waterville at Pan Am Railways’ locomotive repair facility in Waterville. The company is using new technology called Supplemental Energy System to enable more efficient energy use. Prior to the technology, engines would be run idle at the facility for long cold periods. The Supplemental Energy System allows engines to be shut down for periods, but ensure that the vital fluids in the engine are kept at temperatures warm enough to protect the engines. The technology reduces operating costs and environmental impact.

A train then took the Governor, Maine Department of Transportation, State Legislators, officials from Pan Am Railways, the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and major freight shippers including Sappi Fine Paper and Verso Paper Officials to Auburn.

At Danville Junction in Auburn, the Governor will participate in a ribbon cutting for the Gateway Project, which includes major improvements to the freight line. The project will enable the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad and Pan Am Railways to switch railcars simultaneously, saving time and increasing efficiency. Transit times will be reduced and safety will be improved. Importantly, the changes will allow for future passenger rail operations. The project includes funds from State bond, federal grants and private railroad investments.

The Governor and other participants will then travel to Royal Junction in a remote location to observe Pan Am crews installing new rail for the Downeaster expansion to Brunswick. This major project to extend the Downeaster passenger service to Brunswick has been a major priority for the Governor and will be important as the Naval Air Station is decommissioned and redevelopment continues in the region. The Downeaster expansion is funded with State and federal support. Since the first shipment of rail arrived on Aug. 2, crews have installed about 14 miles of rail between Brunswick and Yarmouth.

The last event of the rail trip will take place at Rigby Yard in South Portland. Before arriving at the yard, the Governor and other passengers on the train will be able to see the recently completed Portland Wye Project, which included significant improvements for passenger and freight rail operations, reducing operating costs and laying the groundwork for additional improvements.

The rail projects viewed today follow the recent announcements positively impacting northern Maine shippers with the news of the successful purchase of the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway, which was threatened with abandonment. The State also received \$10.5 million in federal transportation grants to

enable vital improvements to that line to be made so that the rail will remain operational and will be more attractive to a private buyer of the system, which the State is currently pursuing.

“Rail expansion is good for the environment and will help to encourage new development all across Maine, creating jobs and private-sector investments,” said Governor Baldacci. “We will have a more cost-effective way to connect Maine people and businesses to the markets around New England and around the world. Smart investments, like those we are making in freight and passenger rail, will strengthen Maine’s economy for years to come.”

Governor Celebrates Groundbreaking for Caribou Connector

October 25, 2010

CARIBOU – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Commissioner David Cole and local and State officials to officially break ground on the 4.3-mile long Caribou Connector.

“The Caribou Connector is an important transportation enhancement that will provide major benefits to the City of Caribou and Aroostook County,” said Governor Baldacci. “The improved travel mobility will support increased economic growth by reducing travel times and separating local traffic from thru-traffic.”

This new highway segment was recommended as part of the larger Aroostook County Transportation Study, the primary goal of which was to identify transportation improvements that would help lead to future economic growth within the study area. The two-stage Caribou Connector construction project will enable the city to move forward with plans to further develop the downtown area, making it more pedestrian friendly, while moving large through trucks to the connector.

“The Caribou Connector will make a positive impact on the region’s economy, while improving the vitality of downtown Caribou,” said MaineDOT Commissioner Cole.

The connector heads east off of Route 1 south of the Route 1/Route 89 intersection northeast of Caribou, and continues westerly until it connects with Route 161 northwest of Caribou. This route was selected by the transportation study group as the preferred route, as it minimized impacts to existing businesses near downtown and minimized impacts to agricultural operations. The Federal Highway Administration also approved this route as the environmentally preferred route for the bypass.

Soderberg Construction of Caribou is the contractor for the first segment of this project. Preliminary construction on this one-mile segment of the connector will begin later this fall. Construction will be suspended for the winter, then resume in the spring. Construction on this segment is expected to be completed by October 2011.

The second segment, which encompasses 3.3 miles of the connector, is currently being advertised and a construction contractor will be selected later this fall. Construction on this segment will begin in the spring, and the entire length of the 4.3-mile Caribou Connector is expected to be completed and open to traffic in the fall of 2012.

For more information on the Caribou Connector, visit <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/ccdb/index.htm>

Governor Celebrates Ocean Gateway Pier II Groundbreaking

October 29, 2010

PORTLAND – Governor John E. Baldacci today joined officials from the City of Portland and the State of Maine for the groundbreaking ceremony for the Ocean Gateway Pier II.

“This next phase of the Ocean Gateway project will have significant economic impact on Portland and the entire State,” said Governor Baldacci. “This deep-water pier will enhance tourism, and increase commerce and the economic vitality of the region.”

The Governor said that tourism coming to the area from cruise ships has risen dramatically in a short time. The addition of the Ocean Gateway Pier II to Portland’s working waterfront will double the capacity at any one time for the largest of cruise and other ships to be berthed.

Governor Baldacci credited the work of the many local and State partners who have supported the project, and said that support from Maine voters was the critical factor in seeing the project move to the construction phase.

“The funding for this important deep-water project came from a bond question on the June ballot,” said the Governor. “That question gave voters from across the State the opportunity to weigh in on this and other critical infrastructure projects. Their approval for investment in the Ocean Gateway Pier II project shows that even in difficult economic times, Maine people support development with long-term value.”

“The impact of Pier II will benefit the entire State, creating jobs and strengthening our ability to reach markets in the United States and around the world,” said the Governor. “The Ocean Gateway will play a key role in economic growth here for years to come.”

Governor Mourns Death of Marine with Maine Ties

November 4, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned of the death of an active duty Marine with Maine ties.

First Lt. James R. Zimmerman, 25, died Nov. 2 while conducting combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force from Camp Lejeune, N.C.

“Lt. Zimmerman is an American hero who died serving his country,” Governor Baldacci said. “His tragic death is a reminder of the great sacrifices required of our men and women in uniform and their families. We will keep Lt. Zimmerman’s family and friends in our thoughts and prayers during this terrible time.”

Governor Baldacci will order flags flown at half-staff on the day of Lt. Zimmerman’s funeral.

According to Bangor Daily News, Lt. Zimmerman attended Greater Houlton Christian Academy.

Governor Baldacci's Statement on Cianbro Acquisition

November 5, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today issued the following statement on the announcement that Cianbro has acquired Starcon International, Inc., a Texas-based company that provides maintenance and other services to refineries and petrochemical plants across the country.

“Cianbro has a well-established reputation for quality products in infrastructure construction and modular manufacturing, as well as for being a high quality employer in the State of Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “With the purchase of Starcon, Cianbro will continue to expand its business both geographically and in its services offered.”

The Governor said that Cianbro has quickly gained a foothold in the refinery industry through its modular manufacturing work out of Brewer. That facility began production in 2008 of oil refinery modules for Motiva Enterprises.

“Cianbro is a growing force in manufacturing and servicing refineries and today’s announcement promises additional opportunities for this quality Maine company. I commend CEO Peter Vigue for his leadership and congratulate the hard working employees at Cianbro,” said Governor Baldacci. “Today is a great day for Cianbro and for the State of Maine.”

Maine Schools Receive Innovation Grant

November 5, 2010

Madison Memorial and Bucksport High Schools to share in national Search Institute grant award

AUGUSTA – Two Maine school districts - Maine School Administrative District 59, based in Madison, and Regional School Unit 25, in the Bucksport area - have been awarded Investing in Innovation grants by the U.S. Department of Education. The project for which they received grant funding is run by the Search Institute, whose director of the project, Angela Jerabek, will be in Maine November 8 and 9 to meet with the key leaders in both school districts.

The Governor's Children's Cabinet's Communities for Children and Youth Initiative was a partner in developing the winning application, which scored second-highest out of 1,698 applications nationwide.

"Maine is thrilled to be involved in this innovative program that focuses on improved academic and social success by focusing on the skills and strengths of our students. We know that we can help them develop many assets for overcoming their challenges," said First Lady Karen Baldacci, chair of the Governor's Children's Cabinet.

MSAD 59 and RSU 25 are two of the four school district partners in a national project led by the Search Institute of Minneapolis. The project will expand the Building Assets-Reducing Risks Program (BARR), a promising strategy to increase student achievement and growth with a focus on the first year of high school. BARR works to reduce academic failure, increase student attendance, decrease disciplinary incidents and decrease alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

"There is no slowing down in our efforts in Maine to invest in innovation," said Angela Faherty, Ph.D., Maine Commissioner of Education. "The state, as well as individual districts, and consortia of schools, continue to explore all avenues to push at bold innovations that improve student outcomes."

For information on the Investing in Innovation grant program and to view the application, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>

Governor Declares Limited Emergency to Help Restore Power

November 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has signed an Emergency Declaration that will allow power crews from other states to come to Maine. The declaration will help to restore electricity by extending the hours that crews can work.

The Emergency Declaration was issued at 7:25 a.m. today to expedite power restoration for thousands of households in the State currently without electricity as a result of recent and continuing heavy rains, high winds and other storm conditions.

The Governor and the Maine Emergency Management Agency continue to monitor the severe weather and its aftermath.

"Power crews are doing their best to restore power in areas that sustained damage," Governor Baldacci said. "To protect public health and safety, we will do what we can to help get electrical service repaired quickly."

The State of Emergency proclamation will facilitate a waiver from the Federal Department of Transportation to extend the hours of service for workers and allow additional crews from other states to assist with repairs.

The text of the proclamation follows.

State of Maine

Governor's Emergency Proclamation for US DOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Hours of Service Waiver

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has experienced high winds and storm conditions that have left thousands of Maine homes and businesses out of power; and

WHEREAS, work crews will have to work many hours to restore power; and

WHEREAS, power restoration crews will be requested from other states to assist in power restoration; and

WHEREAS, federal rules determine the number of hours the driver of an electrical line repair vehicle may operate; and

WHEREAS, drivers of such vehicles must cease operations when they reach the federal limit on hours of operation, and therefore would have to cease power restoration; and

WHEREAS, these conditions threaten public health and safety and endanger public property if power cannot be restored to Maine homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, these conditions are expected to extend until November 12, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a State of Emergency will facilitate the granting of a waiver from the U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration pursuant to 49 CFR part 390.23 to allow relief from 49 CFR parts 390 through 399, specifically 49 CFR part 395 Hours of Service of Drivers, and subject to the limitations described below, and therefore allow drivers of electrical line repair vehicle to operate additional hours, and

WHEREAS, motor carriers that have an Out-Of-Service Order in effect may not take advantage of the relief from regulation that this declaration provides under 49 CFR 390.23

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of Maine, find that these conditions constitute a civil emergency under 37-B M.R.S.A. section 742, and for the purpose pursuant to 49 CFR part 390.23 of facilitating a waiver to the U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, specifically 49 CFR part 395 Hours of Service of Drivers, do hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists as of November 8, 2010 through November 12, 2010.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed this proclamation in Augusta this 8th day of November in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Ten.

John E. Baldacci

Governor

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Thursday, November 11

November 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Marine First Lt. James R. Zimmerman, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Thursday, Nov. 11, 2010.

Lt. Zimmerman, 25, died Nov. 2 while serving in Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force from Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Lt. Zimmerman grew up in northern Maine and graduated from Greater Houlton Christian Academy. His parents live in Smyrna Mills. A memorial service is planned for Lt. Zimmerman in Houlton on Nov. 11, Veterans Day.

Governor Mourns Death of Soldier with Maine Ties

November 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned today of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Spc. Andrew L. Hutchins, 20, was killed Nov. 8 in Afghanistan. Spc. Hutchins was a Military Policeman serving with the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Ky.

“As Veterans Day approaches, we are painfully reminded that our country remains at war, and that our men and women in uniform are still called to duty for their country,” Governor Baldacci said. “Spc. Hutchins’ death is a terrible tragedy for his family and all who knew him. We honor his sacrifice and his memory, and will keep his wife and family in our prayers.”

Governor Baldacci spoke with members of Spc. Hutchins’ family earlier today.

“His father told me that Spc. Hutchins was wounded earlier, but he wanted to return to Afghanistan to be with his buddies,” Governor Baldacci. “Spc. Hutchins is a hero and deserves our gratitude.”

Spc. Hutchins’ mother lives in Waltham and his father lives in Leeds. His wife plans to stay in Maine with her mother until Spc. Hutchins’ funeral.

Governor Baldacci will order flags flown at half-staff on the day of Spc. Hutchins’ funeral.

Spc. Hutchins is the second person this month with Maine ties killed in Afghanistan. Marine First Lt. James R. Zimmerman, 25, died Nov. 2. A memorial service is planned for Lt. Zimmerman on Nov. 11 in Houlton.

Governor Announces Judicial Nominees

November 9, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced nominations to the Maine District Court.

Governor Baldacci is nominating Judge Christine Foster of Portland for reappointment.

The Governor is nominating Bruce Mallonee of Bangor for a new appointment to the bench.

Judge Foster was first appointed to the District Court in 1996. Before joining the District Court, Foster was Assistant Attorney General for Maine for seven years (1989 to 1996). She received her B.A. from Colby College and her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law.

Mallonee has served as a trial lawyer with Rudman & Winchell in Bangor for 30 years. His practice concentrations are in family law and criminal law. Mallonee has been recognized by the Maine Bar Foundation and the Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project for his pro bono work. He is active in his community, having served as former director for Downeast Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Bangor Education Foundation. He has also been a board member of the American Folk Festival in Bangor since its inception. Mallonee received his undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas and his J.D. from the University of Kansas School of Law.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Select Committee on the Judiciary on Thursday, November 18, and must be confirmed by the Senate. The Governor's Office is working with leaders of both parties on dates for the Senate confirmation session.

Senate Confirmation Session Set for November 19

November 12, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor Baldacci today sent a letter to the Maine State Senate President calling the State Senate into session on Friday, Nov. 19 at 10 a.m. for the confirmation of two nominations he has made for appointment to the District Court.

Governor Baldacci has nominated Judge Christine Foster of Portland for reappointment, and Bruce Mallonee of Bangor for a new appointment to the bench.

The nominations will be considered by the Joint Select Committee on the Judiciary on Thursday, November 18 at 2 p.m.

The Governor worked with leaders of both parties on the date of the Senate confirmation session.

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Friday, November 19

November 16, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Cpl. Andrew L. Hutchins, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Friday, Nov. 19, 2010.

Cpl. Hutchins, 20, was a Military Policeman serving with the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Ky. He was killed Nov. 8 while serving in Afghanistan.

The funeral service for Cpl. Hutchins will be at 11 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 19, at the Augusta Armory.

Maine Health Care Quality Efforts Receive Significant Federal Support

November 16, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today announced that the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will provide up to \$26 million in Medicare funding over three years to support a critical health care quality project already underway in the State.

Maine was named by CMS as one of eight states to participate in a demonstration project that will evaluate effectiveness of doctors and other health professionals working together to improve patient care. The project is also designed to measure how such health care provider partnerships reduce inappropriate and costly emergency department visits and increase prevention and primary care.

“This award helps Maine build on great work already underway to improve how health care is delivered and paid for,” said Governor Baldacci. “Maine’s success in attracting federal support for our best practices rests in the powerful private-public collaborative of Dirigo’s Maine Quality Forum, MaineCare, Quality Counts and the Maine Health Management Coalition. This partnership has worked to ensure Maine remains a leader in health care reforms that will increase access to quality care across the State and reduce its costs.”

The federal support announced today builds on Maine’s State Health Plan, which calls for us to redirect how we finance care and to invest in assuring Maine citizens have their health needs addressed in a comprehensive way.

Maine’s project, the Multi-Payer Advanced Primary Care Practice Demonstration, is led by the Dirigo Health Agency’s Maine Quality Forum. Work began in January 2010 in 22 physician practices across the state. Participating practices are paid to improve health care delivery; rewarding value, not volume. To date, the practices had been funded solely by MaineCare, private insurers and employers.

The project is administered through the Dirigo Health Agency, which has contracted with Dr. Lisa LeTourneau, director of Quality Counts, and will work with the private sector through the Maine Health Management Coalition.

For more information, including a list of the 22 participating practices in the State, visit:
www.dirigohealth.maine.gov

Governor Urges EMMC and Nurses to Continue Talks

November 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today spoke with Eastern Maine Medical Center and representatives of the hospital's nurses association and urged continued negotiations in an effort to resolve an ongoing dispute.

"I know that the leaders of EMMC and that the nurses who work at the hospital share a common goal, which is to provide the best care possible to their patients," Governor Baldacci said. "I urged them all to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible and to continue their good-faith efforts to find agreement."

Governor Baldacci spoke with Michelle Hood, President and CEO for Eastern Maine Health Systems, which includes EMMC, and with representatives of The Maine State Nurses Association, Unit 1 from Bangor.

"I listened to both sides, and I understand that the issues are complex and are made more difficult by the lingering effects of the recession," Governor Baldacci said. "But I believe that the best outcome would be for the nurses and the hospital to continue talking."

Maine's Economy Shows Signs of Improvement, Growth

November 23, 2010

AUGUSTA –Governor John E. Baldacci said today that the improvements in Maine's economic forecast and the most recent unemployment numbers demonstrate that the hard decisions made at the State and national level since the global recession began in December 2007 have helped move the economy toward recovery.

"The hard work and the tough votes that have been cast in Maine and in Washington and the resilience of our people have made a difference," Governor Baldacci said. "In Maine, we have held the line on broad-based taxes, made smart and targeted investments, including important investments in R&D, and restructured government at the State, county and school administration levels to make it more efficient and less expensive. Those actions laid the foundation for recovery."

Maine's Revenue Forecasting Committee today revised its revenue projections for the current fiscal year and for the 2012-13 biennium. The nonpartisan group increased revenues for FY11 by \$111.6 million; for FY12 by \$170.5 million and for FY13 by \$195 million. The RFC's final report will be complete on Dec. 1.

In addition, the Maine Department of Labor today said that unemployment had dropped to 7.4 percent in October, down from 7.7 percent in September and more than two points below the national unemployment rate of 9.6 percent.

"Corporate earnings are driving the improvement in Maine," Governor Baldacci said. "After shedding more than 30,000 jobs, companies in Maine are rebounding and profits are improving, especially for large, multinational corporations. While job creation is still lagging, Maine's unemployment level is dropping. There are still too many people out of work, but at least the unemployment rate is heading in the right direction."

General Fund spending in Maine has decreased since 2008. The current budget for 2011 is \$2.69 billion, on par with spending in 2001, which was \$2.65 billion.

"While other States have been locked in partisan gridlock and were forced to raise taxes during the recession, Maine was different," Governor Baldacci said. "Five straight budgets have passed with overwhelming, bipartisan support. Those budgets have been disciplined and frugal, but they never lost sight of our core values, which include supporting education, protecting the most vulnerable and our environment, and making smart investments."

In its Nov. 1 report, the Maine Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission documented that in August Maine's year-over-year economic activity index moved into positive territory for the first time since April 2008. Additionally, personal income grew 2.6 percent in the first two quarters of 2010 and home prices in the Portland-South Portland- Biddeford metropolitan area were up 4 percent in the second quarter of 2010 compared to the same period last year. It was the second consecutive quarter of growth following 15 quarters where prices were flat or declined.

Despite today's positive economic news, Governor Baldacci emphasized that the economic recovery remains fragile.

"As the CEFC has warned, there are many factors that could undermine the recovery, including policy changes in Washington and a continued lack of consumer confidence. Even with all the caveats, it's better to see revenues growing and the unemployment rate declining," Governor Baldacci said. "But the rebuilt reserves and improving economy put the State in a good position for success."

Governor Mourns Death of Soldier with Maine Ties

November 30, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci has learned today of the death of an active duty soldier with Maine ties.

Private Buddy W. McLain, 24, of Mexico was killed by enemy fire on Nov. 29 while serving in Afghanistan. Private McLain was a cavalry scout with the U.S. Army's 2nd Squadron, 61st Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

"Words fall short of describing the loss of a young soldier," Governor Baldacci said. "Private McLain died serving his country. He has earned the lasting gratitude of his State and nation. We will honor him for the hero that he is. During this tragic time, we all should keep his family and friends in our prayers."

Private McLain attended Mountain Valley High School in Rumford.

Governor Baldacci will order flags in Maine flown at half-staff on the day of Private McLain's funeral.

Governor Celebrates “Invest in Maine” Initiative

December 1, 2010

International Trade Numbers Showing Strength

PORTLAND – Speaking at the 15th Annual Governor’s Breakfast hosted by the World Affairs Council of Maine and the Maine International Trade Center, Governor Baldacci touted Maine’s export strength and recent initiatives to further expand investments in the State.

So far this year, Maine is ranked as the 5th fastest growing State in the U.S. (through September export figures). If that trend continues through the end of the year, 2010 will be a record year for Maine exports.

“During this deep recession, Maine has taken important steps to remain competitive in the international market,” said Governor Baldacci. “Maine is positioned to take advantage of a global economy more than ever before.”

Between 2002 and 2008, Maine exports rose more than \$1 billion. Through the third quarter of 2010, exports are up 37 percent over the previous year. More small and medium sized businesses are exporting from Maine. High tech machinery, biotech and medical products, aircraft components, advanced materials, and Maine’s food products are being exported at increasing levels.

“Maine’s export strength and stability is a testament to traditional industries that have modernized, and to new entrepreneurs who have realized the key to their success is a global strategy,” said the Governor. “The progress of the past eight years positions us well for the future.”

Governor Baldacci outlined early progress of the “Invest in Maine” initiative announced earlier this year. The initiative seeks to aggressively pursue foreign direct investments.

“We have brought together business leaders and stakeholders to move an international investment strategy forward, attracting capital to Maine to continue research, investment and economic growth,” said the Governor. “We launched the initiative by tying in the expertise and connections of the Maine International Trade Center with the support of private donors and the Maine Technology Institute.”

“Invest in Maine” will actively solicit international business leads to connect investors to specific opportunities in the State. The initiative will also position Maine as a leading destination for advanced materials and renewable energy technology investments.

The initiative began in September with the hiring of an Investment Attaché, who recently returned from a series of meetings with industry leaders in Japan and South Korea. Meeting in those countries focused on Maine’s renewable energy successes and manufacturing and logistics capacities. Investment groups from Spain, France, Germany and Norway have also visited the State in recent months.

As a result of the interest from Asian counterparts, the Trade Center is launching an Energy and Education Trade Mission to South Korea to take place next March. The mission will be a great opportunity for Maine to show off its quality secondary schools and colleges as well as establishing itself as a Center of Excellence in renewables, composites and the advanced materials industries.

"I'm proud of the legacy we have built together," said Governor Baldacci. "Facing our challenges and leveraging the quality of our Maine products, strong workforce, and unique capacities of our great State, I am confident that the future will be bright for Maine's economy and people."

Governor Directs Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff for National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

December 3, 2010

AUGUSTA – In accordance with the Presidential proclamation and United States Annotated Title 36 designating December 7 as National Pearl Harbor Day and in respect for the victims of Pearl Harbor, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Tuesday, December 7, 2010.

This year marks the 69th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. More than 2,400 Americans died in the attack. National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day was established to honor those who died in the attack and those who fought in World War II to protect our freedom.

Arts Commission Delivers Report on Cultural Relations with New Brunswick

December 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci was presented today with the initial report outlining future opportunities for expanding cross-border cultural and business opportunities with New Brunswick. In July, the Governor signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with then-Premier Shawn Graham of New Brunswick. The Maine Arts Commission was tasked to work with its counterpart in New Brunswick to develop this first report, which identifies key areas for the State and province to focus on in the future.

“Maine’s creative economy – our entrepreneurs and artists - is an economic engine in this State,” said Governor Baldacci. “Collaborations with our neighbors in New Brunswick in key areas will enhance economic vitality, increase our competitiveness in attracting investments and tourism, and grow jobs. I am pleased to receive this report and hope that future efforts to promote arts and culture between Maine and New Brunswick will enrich our economies and quality of life for all people in our region.”

The report provides an assessment of key factors that hold promise for future collaboration. More than 32,240 Maine jobs are supported through trade between the U.S. and Canada. Canadians make more than 885,400 visits to Maine annually, spending an estimated \$266 million. Recent reports show that three of the top five vacation activities of 2011 are projected be cultural; these include visits to festivals, visits to art museums and touring historic sites.

The report also focused on five key areas for the two regions to work on: encouraging cultural business and tourism opportunities; enhancing cultural information exchange; streamlining the border-crossing process; collaborating in cross-border cultural projects; and examining ways to capitalize on the lessons learned through previous cultural collaborations. A follow-up report is due in April that will concentrate on the status of the identified tasks and the feasibility, practicality and logistics of enhanced support.

“Art and culture are ever more important global commodities, and we work diligently to keep Maine competitive,” said Donna McNeil of the Maine Arts Commission, lead for the State on the task force. “Maine has a distinct culture which is valuable and marketable. Mainers recognize how cultural assets help create jobs, strengthen the economy and build community.”

In the coming months the task force will evaluate potential initiatives and prioritize them into action steps to be implemented in the lead up to the Acadian World Congress in 2014. Organizers expect this event - taking place in northern Maine, northwest New Brunswick and Témiscouata County in Québec - to bring up to \$50 million into these regions.

“Expanding our competitiveness in this economy is enhanced by reaching across boundaries and working with our partners,” said Governor Baldacci. “Good work has been completed to get us to this point. I hope that we will see continuation of these kinds of partnerships.”

2010 Archive of Governor Baldacci's Press Releases

For more information on the MOU and report, please
visit http://mainearts.maine.gov/services_international.aspx

Governor Baldacci Honors Maine Companies Named to Inc. List of Fastest Growing Companies

December 7, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci and State officials recognized the Maine businesses named to the 2010 Inc. 500|5000 list from Inc. Magazine at the Blaine House today.

Twelve companies were included on the 2010 Inc. 500|5000 list of the fastest-growing privately held companies in America. The companies were congratulated by the Governor and by Thaxter Trafton, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development.

“In these tough economic times, it’s important to recognize that there are success stories across the State, and I commend you for making investments here in Maine,” said Governor Baldacci. “We have worked hard at the State level to give you the tools to be successful, whether it’s the Pine Tree Economic Development Zone program, worker training or by not increasing your burden by increasing taxes to balance the budget.”

The Governor credited the businesses on the Inc. list for their forward-thinking, careful management and commitment to a vision.

The Inc. list is a celebration of innovation, a network of entrepreneurial leaders, and an effective public relations showcase.

The 2010 Inc. 500|5000 list is ranked according to percentage revenue growth from 2006 through 2009. Among other things, to qualify, applicant companies must have been founded and generating revenue by June 30, 2006. Additionally, they had to be based in the United States, privately held, for profit, and independent. The minimum revenue required for 2006 is \$80,000; the minimum for 2009 is \$2 million.

“I applaud you for your success and for the impact it has on your company, your employees, your region and the State of Maine,” said Governor Baldacci.

The Maine companies named to the Inc. 500|5000 list were:

Graham Behavioral Services (Augusta, ME)

GWl (Biddeford, ME)

Isamax Snacks (Gardiner, ME)

Listen Up Espanol (Portland, ME)

Look's Gourmet Food (Whiting, ME)

Mailings Unlimited (Portland, ME)

Nationwide Payment Solutions (Scarborough, ME)

New England Medical Transcription (Woolwich, ME)

Preval (Portland, ME)

Storreytime (Portland, ME)

WahlcoMetroflex (Lewiston, ME)

Wright-Pierce (Topsham, ME)

"The leaders of the companies on this year's Inc. 5000 have figured out how to grow their businesses during the longest recession since the Great Depression," said Inc. president Bob LaPointe in a press release from the Magazine. "The 2010 Inc. 5000 showcases a particularly hardy group of entrepreneurs."

Governor Orders Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff on Saturday, December 11

December 8, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of Private First Class Buddy W. McLain, Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset Saturday, Dec. 11, 2010.

PFC McLain died Nov. 29 while serving in Afghanistan. He was assigned to the U.S. Army's 2nd Squadron, 61st Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

PFC McLain lived in Mexico, Maine and had attended Mountain Valley High School in Rumford. A memorial service is planned for PFC McLain at Mountain Valley High School on Dec. 11.

Governor Presents State of Maine Silver Star and Gold Star Honorable Service Medals

December 8, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today presented State of Maine Gold and Silver Star Honorable Service Medals to a number of veterans and family members during a ceremony at the State House. Gold Star medals go to the families of veterans who perished in the line of duty. Silver Star medals are given to veterans who are former prisoners of war and Purple Heart recipients. The medals were first awarded to Maine veterans in August 2006, and more than 1,000 medals have been presented since that time.

"It as a privilege to be here to honor our veterans and their families," Governor Baldacci said. "Your service to your country and your sacrifices for our freedom will never be forgotten."

All of the Prisoners of War at the ceremony served during WWII. All of the Purple Heart Recipients at the ceremony served in Vietnam, with the exception of one who served in WWII.

Below is the list of veterans recognized today.

Gold Star Honorable Service Medal

CPL Paul M. Fecteau, Army, MIA May 10, 1942, Augusta

PVT Alfred W. Maxwell Jr., Marines, Sept. 10, 1942, Winthrop

Tec 5 James F. Shea, Army, 1944, Randolph

PVT Raymond G. Stevens, Army, Aug. 1, 1944, Freedom

Silver Star Honorable Service Medal

Purple Heart, World War II

PFC Bernard C. Drouin, Army, March 18 & May 12, 1945, Waterville

S/Sgt Gerard J. Gaboury, Army, Oct. 3, 1944, Augusta

Tec 5 George A. Quintal, Army, March 9, 1945, West Gardiner

Purple Heart, Vietnam

LCpl Clyde A. Fowler, Marines, Feb. 1969, Randolph

SP4 John T. Haines, Army, March 19, 1968, Augusta

SP4 Robert L. Harvey, Army, Feb. 14, 1968, Augusta

1Lt Richard E. Traiser, Marines, Feb. 6, 1968, Freeport

Purple Heart, Persian Gulf:

SSG Roland A. Choate Jr., Marines, Feb. 14, 1991, Farmingdale

SSG Dale A. Woodman, Army, Sept., 24, 2004, Raymond

Those who could not make today's ceremony:

SGT Leroy L. Maheux, Army, 1968, Vietnam, Augusta

Sgt Ronald S. Dodge, Marines, Aug. 25, 1968, Vietnam, West Gardiner

MSG Samuel Newbury Jr., Army, Dec. 10, 1967 & Jan. 17, 1968, Vietnam, West Gardiner

SP4 Richard E. Sleeper, Army, July 11, 1967, Vietnam, Randolph

MAJ Richard C. West, Army, Nov. 12, 1966, Vietnam, Randolph

Public Hearing to be Held on Recommendations for Maine's Implementation of Federal Health Reform Law

December 10, 2010

AUGUSTA – The Steering Committee on Health Reform and the Maine Advisory Committee on Health Systems Development will be holding a public hearing at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010 at Room 228 in the State House in Augusta.

The hearing will give the public the opportunity to comment on the draft report developed by the two health groups. The report contains recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding State implementation of the comprehensive national health reform legislation, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law by President Obama earlier this year.

The Governor created the Steering Committee on Health Reform to work with the Advisory Council, a stakeholder group created by the State Legislature to advise the State Legislature and Governor's Office on health care issues. The groups held 14 public meetings across the State.

A final draft of the report will be prepared after public comment. Final recommendations will be made by the Advisory Council on Dec. 17.

For more information on the Advisory Committee and for a link to the draft report, please visit <http://www.maine.gov/healthreform>

Governor Baldacci Pledges State Support for Bushmaster Workers and Windham Community

December 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today met with State Senator Bill Diamond and State Representative Gary Plummer to discuss the planned closing of Bushmaster Firearms International's facility in Windham.

"We are working aggressively on two fronts," Governor Baldacci said. "The Maine Department of Labor was onsite today to begin the process of helping workers affected by this decision. My office and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development are working with the owner of the building, Sen. Diamond, Rep. Plummer and Rep. Mark Bryant to redevelop the site."

According to Bushmaster, the closure will affect 71 hourly and salaried employees over a period of time beginning Feb. 10, 2011, and ending on about March 31, 2011.

"It's important that the workers and the community know that we will be there for them, that they are not alone and that we will do everything we can to bring new opportunities to the facility," Governor Baldacci said.

Governor Applauds Sen. Collins' Efforts to Extend Pilot Program to Increase Truck Weight Limits in Maine

December 14, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today applauded the inclusion in a U.S. Senate spending bill of a one-year extension of a pilot program allowing heavier trucks on federal highways in Maine and Vermont.

“The pilot program enacted last year has already demonstrated results,” Governor Baldacci said. “We know the increase in weight limits on interstates north of Augusta makes our secondary roads safer, reduces maintenance costs and makes Maine more competitive with other states in the region.”

Governor Baldacci received a call today from U.S. Senator Susan Collins, who worked to persuade the Appropriations Committee to include the extension in a Senate omnibus spending bill.

The pilot program, which took effect last winter, is set to expire Friday unless Congress takes action. The Senate is expected to debate the legislation this week.

The program allows trucks weighing as much as 100,000 pounds to travel on interstates in Maine. Without the extension, the weight limit will drop back to 80,000 pounds.

“Sen. Collins has been a longtime advocate for increased truck weights,” Governor Baldacci said. “This is important to the safety of Maine’s roads and to our economy, and the provision deserves the full support of the U.S. Senate and House. This is huge. If approved, it will mean tens of millions of dollars for Maine businesses and will support jobs throughout the State.”

Governor Receives Final Report from Nature-Based Tourism Task Force

December 16, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci today received the final report from the Governor's Nature-Based Tourism Task Force and thanked them for their service. The task force was formed five years ago to implement recommendations by Fermata, a nationally known nature-based tourism consulting firm, to develop and expand nature-based tourism opportunities in Maine's rural communities.

"I'm pleased with the successes detailed in this report," said Governor Baldacci. "This effort began five years ago as an economic development initiative focused on rural Maine, where there is a wealth of natural resources, but a lack of basic tourism infrastructure to connect visitors to these recreational opportunities. Natural resources and tourism are vibrant elements of our State and our economy and have been priorities of my Administration."

Task Force members have focused on making the critical connections between regional resources, tourism and economic development. During tough economic times, an important goal has been how to maximize resources and by doing so, to propel Maine as the premier tourism destination.

The Governor said that impressive gains have been made since the initiative began, and that fully achieving the goals of the initiative requires continued and long-term commitment from all partners.

For more information on the Nature-Based Tourism Initiative Task Force and for a link to the report, please visit http://www.maine.gov/decd/decd_information/reports.shtml

Task Force Delivers Recommendations for Funding Portsmouth-Kittery Bridge Replacement and Repairs

December 17, 2010

AUGUSTA – The Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force, created by Maine Governor John Baldacci and New Hampshire Governor John Lynch to help indentify funding needs and solutions for the three Portsmouth-Kittery bridges, has delivered its recommendations to the two governors.

“The Task Force has developed a comprehensive, 30-year approach to replacing and maintaining these critical bridges,” Governor Baldacci said. “The plan gives the next Administration and new Legislature an innovative path forward and makes significant progress on a realistic funding mechanism. We know we must maintain these bridges for Maine’s economic health. These recommendations will help make that possible.”

Among the recommendations are a plan for funding the replacement of the Memorial Bridge, funded through a combination of State and federal monies and federal TIGER II grants; funding the rehabilitation of the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge using federal funds, state turnpike funds, state bridge funds and department of defense funds; and a creation of a bi-state bridge fund, equally funded by the two states to be used for repairs and rehabilitation of the bridges.

The Task Force also recommended revitalizing the Interstate Bridge Authority (IBA) to oversee repairs on the bridges and to serve as the administrator of the bridge fund. The IBA has been dormant for several years, and was originally created to oversee the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge.

“The Task Force has demonstrated the strong working relationship between Maine and New Hampshire, and shows that we can find solutions to complicated problems when we work together,” Governor Baldacci said. “I want to commend all the participants for their hard work and commitment to moving our two states forward.”

These recommendations will be presented to the incoming Governor and Legislature.

The Bi-State Bridge Funding Task Force was created by executive order by Governor’s Baldacci and Lynch in order to address the extraordinary funding needs of the three Portsmouth-Kittery Bridges.

The task force met five times over an eight week period to review, discuss and agree upon the estimated funding levels required for the Memorial, Sarah Mildred Long and the I-95 bridges for the next 30 years. This included the discussion and identification of funding mechanisms, partners, joint structure, legislation and other actions necessary to meet the funding needs of these three bridges.

Official Portrait of Governor Baldacci Unveiled at State House

December 18, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci's official portrait was unveiled this afternoon at a ceremony in the Rotunda of the State House. As is custom, the Governor's portrait was commissioned to serve as a permanent representation of the Governor and the history of Maine, and will hang in the State House.

The Governor and First Lady selected Ms. Jean Pilk, of Cape Elizabeth to paint the portrait. Among Pilk's past commissions include former Secretary of Defense Colin Powell.

Pilk was one of 17 artists who sent in portfolios to the Maine Arts Commission for consideration by the Governor and First Lady.

Governor Baldacci requested a number of specific details be included in the portrait. A photograph of the Governor's family is found in the background of the painting, as well as the plaque that has been in Governor Baldacci's office throughout his administration with his father's words: "What have you done for the people today?"

Today's event is the first time an unveiling has occurred while the sitting Governor is still in office. Governor Baldacci's portrait will be hung where Governor Angus King's portrait had been and all the gubernatorial portraits will move one space over in the Rotunda of the State House.

For more information on the portrait artist, visit <http://www.jeanpilkportraits.com/>

State Agencies Closed Thursday, Dec. 23 and Friday, Dec. 24, 2010

December 20, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci reminded the public that many Maine State government offices are closed on Thursday, Dec. 23, as a cost saving initiative for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Biennial State Budget. State offices are also closed Friday, Dec. 24, in observance of Christmas.

“Please plan ahead for any services you may need from State agencies during this and the other State government shutdown days,” said Governor Baldacci. “When scheduling the days, every effort has been made to reduce the impact to Maine people, businesses and communities.”

The public is encouraged to check with a specific agency before seeking State services on Thursday, Dec. 23, 2010.

The reference to the State closures is Public Law 2009, Chap. 213, Part SSS:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/PUBLIC213-PtCtoEnd.asp

This is the fifth of 10 State government closure days in Fiscal Year 2011, which began July 1, 2010.

The five remaining closure days for Fiscal Year 2011 are:

Friday, January 14, 2011

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Governor Mourns Passing of State Rep. Everett McLeod Sr.

December 21, 2010

AUGUSTA – Governor John E. Baldacci issued the following statement today after learning of the death of State Rep. Everett McLeod Sr. of Lee. McLeod represented House District 11. He had begun his fourth term, having been sworn in at his home by the Governor due to the Representative's inability to travel to Augusta.

"This is a great loss. I've known Everett for 15 years, and he was a good man and a dedicated public servant," said Governor Baldacci. "He cared deeply for his family and his community and was a strong advocate for his constituents. I enjoyed working with him to reopen the Lincoln mill and to make life better for the people he represented. Everett was a tireless advocate and will be greatly missed by his family, friends, community and by me personally."

The Governor called Rep. McLeod's wife, Sarah, to offer his condolences to her and the rest of the family.

Governor Baldacci will direct that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff in remembrance and honor of Rep. McLeod. As is the practice for sitting members of the Maine State Legislature, flags will be ordered to be lowered statewide for three days, beginning two days before the day of the funeral and ending on the day of the services. No details about the funeral are yet available.

Governor Orders Flags at Half-Staff Wednesday, Dec. 22, through Friday, Dec. 24

December 21, 2010

AUGUSTA – In remembrance and honor of State Rep. Everett McLeod Sr., Governor John E. Baldacci has directed that the United States flag and the State of Maine flag be flown at half-staff from tomorrow, Dec. 22, to sunset Friday, Dec. 24, 2010.

Rep. McLeod served District 11 in the Maine House of Representatives. He had just been sworn in to his fourth term.

Rep. McLeod's funeral service is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Friday at the Clay Funeral Home in Lincoln.

Governor Recognizes Sugarloaf First Responders

December 28, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today recognized the men and women who responded to a ski lift derailment at Sugarloaf resort in the Carrabassett Valley.

"I want to thank the first responders for their skills and proficiency," Governor Baldacci said. "It was clear during a full-scale exercise this November that the safety personnel at Sugarloaf, the local police and fire departments, the Franklin County Emergency Management Agency and their State Partners at the Maine Emergency Management Agency were well-prepared for an event like this. Their skills and proficiency, as demonstrated today, have helped to protect the public, and to make sure the evacuation of the people stuck on the ski lift went as quickly and safely as possible."

At about 10:30 a.m. this morning, the Spillway East Chairlift derailed. According to Sugarloaf, six skiers were injured, and a large number of skiers had to be evacuated from the lift.

"Our first concern is for the people who were injured and for their recovery," Governor Baldacci said.

The chairlift is currently licensed by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation under the authority of the Board of Elevator and Tramway Safety for calendar year 2010.

Governor Requests FEMA Disaster Assessment for Counties Impacted by Dec. 12 Storm and Flooding

December 29, 2010

AUGUSTA - Governor John E. Baldacci today sent a request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency requesting a Preliminary Damage Assessment for the severe storm that hit the State beginning on Dec. 12. The initial assessment will focus on Washington, Aroostook, Penobscot and Piscataquis counties.

"This request sets into motion the next step toward assistance for those areas hit hardest by this storm," Governor Baldacci said. "Washington County, by far, suffered the worst of the storm, and we are working to get assistance. We couldn't have gotten this far without the hard work of Calais City Manager Diane Barnes, County EMA Director Michael Hinerman and all the people who have responded to this storm and who have helped to gather information."

To qualify for a Presidential Disaster Declaration, the State must be able to document statewide damage of at least \$1.65 million. In addition, each individual county must meet its own threshold for damage to receive aid.

Since the storm, the Maine Emergency Management Agency has been working with local and State partners to gather damage estimates. As of today, reported damage for the State was \$1.76 million. Washington County suffered the greatest reported damage at \$1.16 million; Aroostook at \$281,616; Penobscot at \$158,715 and Piscataquis at \$68,387. Other counties reported damage that contributed for the statewide total but do not appear to make the county-level threshold.

If the reported damage is verified by the FEMA PDA teams, the Governor will request a Presidential Disaster Declaration. If granted, the federal government will contribute 75 percent of the cost of necessary repairs, with the State contributing 15 percent and local governments 10 percent.

Assessments will begin on Monday, Jan. 3, in Washington County.